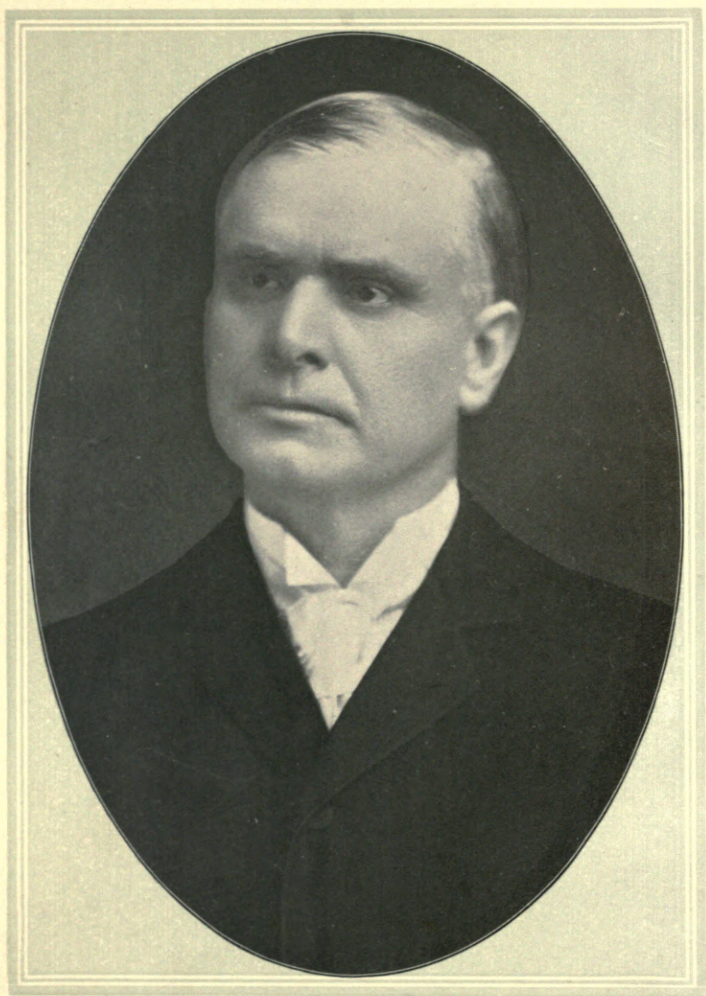


BELCHER





TOO MUCH BROTHER-IN-LAW

BY
ADAM J. BURKE

LOS ANGELES, CAL.



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BELCHER

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BY

ADAM J. BURKE

This Book is a true story of real life. Only
the names of people and places
mentioned herein are fictitious

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To the memory of my beloved mother,
MARY MIDDLETON BURKE,
this book is dedicated.



CHAPTER I.

The morning sun had just commenced to send its welcome rays over the Ox mountains into the fertile plains below, making the beautiful landscape of flowers and verdure create a picture only seen in the Emerald Isle, when Edmund and Matilda L'Estrange decided to call their first born son to make ready to leave the beautiful village of Coolaney, the home of his childhood, to take the Midland and Great Western Railway for Dublin, there to enter the time-honored institution of learning and culture, known the world over as Trinity College, Dublin.

"We must hurry or we will not catch the ten o'clock," said the father. "Call Abner again and get him ready at once, for if we are late for the train, it will be a sure sign his life will be full of disappointments. Dear, do stop crying; he is not going away for ever," said his kind-hearted father.

"Oh, how can I give him up," sobbed his fond, and too-indulgent mother, for she, like all true mothers, thought the one now about to leave her was the dearest of them all. All his pranks and faults were transformed from early vice, mischief and villany to cute and boyish tricks, soon to be forgotten, while his goodness and kindness with his

smart sayings were sandwiched with a mother's love and stored away in the secret archives of the maternal core, there to lie until some day they were brought out and repeated to his younger sisters and brothers to enlighten them, just as mother earth stores the sunshine of ages in her bosom there to lie in darkness until resurrected in after years to give light to her children.

"Is Abner ready?" was the next sound heard in the old hall of the L'Estrange domicile.

"Soon will be," said his sister Olivia, as she with sisterly tenderness and love, packed his grip for his first start in life.

All now ready, Abner kissed his sisters and mother good-bye, shook hands with his brothers and the servants, and gave his pet dog a farewell glance.

"Go on," said Jack to coal-black Charlie, and as the words reached the horse's ears, he sped at a twelve-mile gait on to the station which was just seven miles away. Sitting on one side of the Irish jaunting car, his father on the other, with Jack the driver on the box, Abner looked up and down the valley and along the forest-clad slopes, bidding his native haunts good-bye, realizing for the first time how he loved the home of his birth. As they sped along near the village, over a macadamized road, hedged on either side by the well-known Irish White Thorn, which was in full blossom and sent

forth its fragrance on the fresh morning air, nature seemed to smell its sweetest, but could not soothe the aching heart or stifle the mother's and sisters' cries which now rang more loudly in Abner's ears. Black Charlie, who in days past could not go fast enough for Abner, now was taking him at too quick a gait to suit his youthful master.

"Master, look at the clock, we made the seven miles in thirty-five minutes. We will have twenty-five minutes to wait," said Jack, as he pulled up at the railway station.

All now got off except Jack, who walked the horse up and down to keep him from catching cold. Abner sat on the wall near the entrance, while his father got the ticket and arranged for his baggage, which, by the way, they never checked in Ireland or England then.

It was marked like freight, in America, and all had to hunt up their own baggage at their destination.

The sun was now well up over the mountain top; working men in the Middleton & Pollexfen Mills, were going back to work after breakfast; the lark in the near-by meadow was singing his morning lay while soaring to his home in the clouds; the thrush, with extended beak, was sending forth his best efforts of love to his mate sitting on her brood in a laurel tree on the old Mitchell farm; Robert R. Hillas' doves were cooing while eating some of

Middleton & Pollexfen's wheat; the deer in the Markree Demesne were slumbering under the trees in peace, and all nature seemed happy and at home. In the midst of all, Abner was still sad and his mind wandering. He was sad, for he was leaving all these scenes behind, and as his thoughts were turned backward like Bellamy's book, the snorts of the iron steed could be plainly heard above all the sweet cadence of nature. Soon the steam from its nostrils could be seen in the distance, and the next moment, it pulled up at the Ballisodare station, puffing and blowing like a hunted deer.

"All aboard," was the next cry.

"She is leaving, Abner," said his father, impatiently.

"No, she will not leave until old Middleton comes," was the reply; "she will wait for him."

This is in a country where they boast all are treated alike under the laws of travel. Alas, no; rank and the gold guinea play just as prominent a part as in this land of ours where we acknowledge some go Count, Duke, Duck, and Title-hunting, while almost all worship the golden calf which Israel had made.

Abner now sees old Middleton, and a stooped, bow-legged clerk coming along, and like the condemned man, knows his time is up, bids farewell to his father and Jack, the whistle blows and away they go. This is Abner's first ride, and he never

before had seen trees, houses and animals move at such a pace. Farms and houses passed him so he could not count the poles that held the wire strings for the birds to perch on.

"Coolooney all aboard," "Ballymote all aboard," "Mullingar all aboard," were the next sounds that greeted Abner's ears. When the guard on the train called out Mullingar, someone in the car repeated, "Beef to the heels like a Mullingar heifer." Abner looked out and on the adjacent field he could see the exemplification of the words, for there stood in wonder, with heads high in the air, a beautiful herd of the fattest cattle on earth.

"Beef, indeed, to the heels, and as smooth as an eel's skin," cried Abner, with delight, for he always loved nice animals and now thought he would leave his seat and look these over, but, before he got as far as the wire fence, "All aboard" was called again, and the train was moving slowly when Abner reached it.

"Shut the door on him, if he does not stay in," said the guard to the porter, angrily. Abner did not again leave his seat until Broadstone terminus was reached and all commenced to leave the car. Looking around him, he was surprised at the mammoth drapery establishment of Pym Brothers Company, Limited, and turning to a boy, said: "That is a great deal larger shop than we have in our

town; I'll go and get some lemon drops before I go to the Dean."

Suiting the action to the word, he walked across the street to find this giant establishment could not fill his penny order as well as the little store in the country village, on whose sign were the following words:

"Bibles, Blackball and Butter; Testaments, Tar and Treacle; Godly Books and Gimlets, as well as Sweets and Candies, sold here." Also, "Grocer to Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales."

Turning to the same boy with disappointment plainly on his face, Abner exclaimed:

"Dublin belongs to the Allopathic, while Coolaney is indeed Homopathic," and he again swelled out with pride in his native town and her wonderful store.

"I must see the Dean at once," said he, as he walked towards T. C. D., for it is now noon and meal time.

In a few minutes, he was at the sanctuary and registering his name, "Abner L'Estrange, Coolaney, County Sligo, Ireland; Secular and Divinity Education desired." Having done this, he was given his room number and assigned to a place among the seven thousand seekers of knowledge who are daily fed at the tables of old Trinity. Din-

ner bell now rang and Abner joined the boys in their march to the table.

"Sit up straight," "Keep your arms in," "Wait until you are waited on," "Get up and leave the dining hall," were the words addressed to a smart youth at the opposite table.

Abner now found a place where he must practice what mother preached to him so long.

First meal over, he was at home, and he was determined to be among the best boys in his class. He studied Greek and Hebrew, read the Bible with care, tried hard to find out the Truth. Found he could not very well swallow Jonah and his whale, or how the fish increased so rapidly on dry land; but on the whole, he got along very well, passed his secular examination in the front rank, and now commenced to study the Church and its doctrine. He was one of the doubting Thomas kind and wished to put his fingers into the nail prints and thrust his hand into the hole in the side every time—a failing which is liable to get a student into trouble, as it did him, later on. When he read his essay on "Infant Baptism," he took too much pains to deny that the child was re-generated or born again; said the infant was grafted into the body of Christ's Church, but no spiritual change had taken place in the cherub; his regeneration would take place later on, if at all, when he was converted—if he ever was. Bishop Straughan grew furious at

this innovation, as he was pleased to call it; denounced Abner as a heretic and a backslider; said he must recant instantly, or leave the theological school at once.

"Show me where I am wrong, and I will correct it," said Abner meekly, to this ruler over God's heritage.

"Well, the Church says, be regenerated, etc., and he that believeth not in the Church and its teaching, the same is a heathen and a Publican."

Abner replied, "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good; search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of me; and nowhere in the Bible does it say or even hint that the child is regenerated."

"Stop!" cried his lordship, "Leave this hall instantly, and when you are ready to recant, I will ask the Church to take you back. Until then, go—go, I say!"

Abner stood in utter amazement, wondering what step next to take, when the immortal Dean passed and whispered in his ear: "Though all men forsake thee, I am with thee even unto the ends of the earth. Stand fast by your convictions, and Christ will make you free."

These words were balm to the young wounded soul and he commenced to sing in a low voice the words of Cardinal Newman, "Lead, kindly light amidst the encircling gloom, lead Thou me on; I

do not wish to see, one step enough for me, lead thou me on."

The sun was now going down in the west as the young martyr to his convictions, walked away from his Alma Mater to seek employment in the outer world. Wending his way to the dock, he found a boat to Liverpool, and he embarked for that city. Arriving there next day, he sought employment at the various merchants' offices. He at last found one, where he could earn twenty-one shillings a week as clerk. Next day he commenced to work, and the first, second, third and fourth weeks were passed, and his work was perfectly satisfactory. His wages were doubled, but his path was not to be strewn with roses. The clouds caused by the Bishop's wrath were growing darker and darker, until, one day, he found Abner's employer and asked that he be discharged without recommend.

Mr. Bullis, with sorrow printed on his face, called Abner into the inner office on the twentieth Monday in his employ, looked up into his youthful face with pity and said: "Abner, I must let you go, or the Bishop will ruin my business."

"Well, Mr. Bullis, I have been faithful; can not you give me a recommend so as I can get another job?"

"No, my dear boy, I can not. His Lordship has forbid me to do so, and I cannot afford to antagonize him. Abner," continued Mr. Bullis, "you

had better take back what you said, as the Bishop is a most influential man. I suppose you know, though, he is a cousin to the Premier, and that is how he got his job."

This was something new to Abner, for the Bishop had already told him that the Lord selects men to be bishops who are known to be far above other men in the fields of learning and piety. Now he learned he was made bishop because he had a pull with the powers that be, same as a ward politician gets his relative on the police force in New York City.

"Mr. Bullis," said Abner, "you are a coward, and as your name is Nelson, I would suggest, as Alexander did of old, you change your name or your conduct. I will not recant; I will not take back one word I have spoken. I will answer only to Him in whom we live, move and have our being. I do not expect justice this side the clouds. I have already appealed my case to Him before whom Bishops, Popes and Kings must bow, same as poor students, and where true and exact justice will be meted out to all alike, regardless of their wealth or station in life. Mr. Bullis, why do you deny me what is my right—a recommend?"

"My dear fellow," said Mr. Bullis, "my heart aches for you; I would give you a recommend if I dared to. You know, Abner, that most of us

English believe that whatever the Bishop does and says is right."

"Well, Mr. Nelson Bullis, I shall pray to God for the English people that the scales may some day fall from their eyes, and the cobwebs that shroud their intellect, and that they will see the truth face to face, and not 'through a glass darkly,' as they now do."

"Now, Abner," said Mr. Bullis, "here's your day's pay, and do not come to work tomorrow, for I have a man to take your place in the morning."

"I did not hire out for a day, Mr. Bullis," said Abner, with much warmth; "you will give me a week's pay, or I'll cite you before the mayor; I will not let you cheat me, even if you are doing God's servant's dirty work by discharging me without a cause."

After much grumbling Mr. Bullis drew from the safety vault in his pantaloons a week's pay and handed it to Abner, saying, as he did so, "Here, and I am sorry to have to let you go."

These words touched Abner's noble soul and he handed back the week's pay to his employer, saying, "Keep this, I will not take it; I haven't worked for it," and reaching out his large hand to the merchant, he bid him farewell and walked out on Water Street.

After Abner departed, Mr. Bullis thought the

matter over more seriously, and after a few minutes sent the office boy to call him back.

Abner returned to find his former employer in a sort of stupor.

"Well," said he, "what do you wish to say to me?"

"Well, Abner, if you can find a job, send your employer to me and I'll give him a good word about you and he cannot show it to the Church people, if they go to haul me up for it."

Abner's face flushed an angry fire, and turning on his heel, said with emphasis: "No, I will not. I will go to a land where the God of love and justice and not the God of despotic vengeance is worshipped; where all men have a chance and a right to earn a living; where every man is a sovereign and where no man is now master," and that night found Abner L'Estrange a passenger on board the White Star line *Britannic*, in stateroom 141, bound for the City of New York.

After Abner had left, his employer said to the junior clerk, "that fellow Abner is no one's fool; I wish I had kept him—Church or no Church."

While this conversation was taking place, the *Britannic* was plowing her way to the Western Hemisphere, with one thousand three hundred souls on board. Abner L'Estrange was tired and sick and went early to bed. When he looked out the next morning, he could see nothing in sight but blue

—blue sky, blue ocean and blue Abner. “Trinity again,” said he, “all blue.”

On the sixth day out, the sea gulls which had deserted them on the second morning, now flew around the ship’s sides looking for food, but no other signs of land were visible, and the poor fellow was sick nigh unto death, when a sympathetic passenger walked by, and said to Abner:

“Young man, you have a weak stomach.”

“I cannot see, sir, how you say that; am I not sending it out as far into the sea as any of the rest of the passengers?”

This was the first time he wished for the angel of death to call him hence. Struggling to his room, he lay there for days, and when told New York was in sight, he did not seem to understand, for he was in a violent fever, and would answer by asking if there were any bishops there.

“No, but King Croker is there, and he is just as tyrannical.”

“Well, we must land there, anyway, but I shall not stay there very long,” said the exile of Erin.

Abner’s sickness was now leaving him, and as land showed in sight, his heart took courage and the invigorating breeze from the shore gave him new life. “Well,” cried he, “won’t I be glad when my feet touch terra firma again!”

The Britannic was now within a few miles of the dock where she was to give up her living cargo.

When he looked out, he eyes fell upon the mammoth beehive of Western industry; crafts of all nations except Carrie's were there, plowing the waves or sitting quietly on them like a sea gull. The sounds that then traversed the air reminded him of an old story he had read at school, "Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues," for sailors from every clime were busily employed on the vessels in the harbor.

"All first-class passengers ashore," said the man at the head of the gang-plank.

"I'd like to go ashore, but I do not feel first-class," muttered Abner, slowly.

"See your ticket. All right, go up the plank."

"Thank God," cried Abner, "I'm on land once more. My stomach will no longer be used as a food mixer for the sea gulls and fish of the Atlantic Ocean, as it has been for the past seven days."

Abner was now at the foot of Broadway, New York, friendless, almost penniless, and alone. Night was fast coming on him, so he must look out for some place to sleep.

"Where can I find a room?" he asked of a street Arab.

"Lots 'em. You can get fine suites or rooms at the Waldorf Astoria for a hundred dollars a week, or I get a bed at the boys' lodging house for a dime. Come with me."

"The latter would suit my purse, while the

former I suppose, would suit my tired body best," thought the stranger to himself. "I will ask this officer, however, to recommend me to some respectable place.

"Officer, where are the best houses to get board and rooms at?"

The Yankee with the Irish tongue, said: "I guess that house across the street's all right."

"Officer, do you know of any one who could tell me for certain?"

"I room there," said the limb of law and disorder, "and I should know."

"Well," said Abner, "you should, but you're only guessing at it, and I want one who knows, not guesses."

"Now, you go there and hire board, or I'll give you a free room in jail for a month."

Abner read something in the Lexow investigation report about police bribery and corruption, so he hired his board at the sister-in-law of this efficient officer, rather than incur his further displeasure; but he resolved to leave New York city in the morning, if he could not find a place where life was more congenial to him than this favorite house. "I will not stay here another day," he said, with tears running down his face.

The morning came and he dressed himself in his black coat and seamless vest, walked up Broadway, wondering where he could get employment, when

his orbs rested on the "World" building, the dome of which towered towards the great architect's home. "Boy Wanted" was on the bulletin board.

Stepping into the head office, he inquired for the manager.

"I am he," said the brainy son of Israel, "and I'll talk to you in a minute if you will please take a seat."

"I will do so," said Abner, meekly.

"Now, my friend, what will I be doing for you?"

"Give me that job on the bulletin board," he answered.

"Well, my son, if you are a boy, where do we get our men? Take off your coat and go to work. Four dollars a week, but if you are worthy, you will be advanced soon. Are you an Irish Hebrew, may I ask?"

"I am Irish, and believe in the God of the Jews," said Abner, with a smile.

Pulitzer's heart is like his nose—large for the rest of his body—and instead of paying him four dollars a week, as agreed, he gave him six times that amount, and Abner, in patriarchial style, called him blessed, and exclaimed:

"No wonder he owns the world, for while he does not have nor believe in Bishops, he does believe in the Fatherhood of God and the Uni-

versal Brotherhood of Man and practices just what he preaches, rendering unto the King what is His and to all men the helping hand of friendship and brotherly love."

CHAPTER II.

"George Lewis," said his sister Ethel, "hurry up and get ready to go to work. Bishop Straughan and his nephew have got you a good position with Mr. Nelson Bullis, the wholesale fish dealer on Water Street. I have a letter here to Mr. Bullis from them, recommending you."

"What does he wish me to do?"

"Keep his books and sell goods, I believe," said his sister.

"Well, I wish he had kept his recommend; I don't know a mackerel from a sturgeon, and what is more, I don't care to learn. John Thorne and I are going up the river fishing and we will not be back for a week."

"Mother said you must go to work this morning, and instructed me to tell you so."

With a growl on his lips, scowl on his forehead, his teeth set, the veins in his neck swollen, he went to the breakfast table that morning ready to find fault with everything and anything. Breakfast over, he left home for the wholesale fish house. On reaching the door, he asked if the proprietor was in. Mr. Bullis eyed him critically and his style of entry did not make a good impression on this hard-headed vendor of aquatic products.

"I am he," said Mr. Bullis, still keeping his eyes on the candidate for the position of trust created for him by clerical vengeance. Without a word, George Lewis handed Mr. Bullis the letter of recommendation from the Bishop and his nephew. It read as follows:—

"To Nelson Bullis, Esq., 198 Water Street, Liverpool.

This will introduce to you Mr. George Lewis, a young man of excellent habits and disposition. My uncle and I both take pride in recommending him to you. He is a most obedient, dutiful and affectionate son; a kind, attentive and fond brother and a true Christian, and we are sure any confidence you may be pleased to place in him will not be betrayed. With our blessing, he will enter your house as soon as you deem meet.

Yours,

J. F. STRAUGHAN,
Rector."

The merchant read the letter, and beckoning to the young man to follow, led the way into the inner office. When there he turned to George Lewis and said:

"Come here, and I will show you what I want you to do. All goods shipped for cash or on credit, have got to be charged in this book by you, and you are responsible for everything that goes out of this store. Here are the Sales Book, Stock

Book, Day Book, Journal, Ledger, Time Book and Cash Book. Look them all over and if there is anything you do not understand, I am here to explain. See that all bills receivable and payable are settled on time; see that insurance policies are all renewed before they expire. Do you understand?"

"I do. How much pay am I going to get for this and how many days vacation?"

"Fifty-six days out of three hundred and sixty-five," said Mr. Bullis, with a wink.

"All right," said George Lewis, forgetting that there were fifty-two Sundays in a year.

"Mr. Bookkeeper, please charge two crates of Scotch herring at seven-eighths of a penny each, to J. W. Walker. Give me the bill, please, quick, customer is waiting."

"How many in a crate?"

"144 fish in each. Please hurry."

"I'll send the bill by mail," said the bookkeeper, "give him the fish."

"He wants his bill with them," said the shipping clerk, "or he will not take them."

"Here it is," said George, who billed two hundred and eighty-eight Scotch herring at seven-eighths of a penny each.

Forty-eight customers called that day, and George was expected to post all his books before 6 P. M.

It was just three A. M. when he rang his mother's door bell.

In the morning his mother called him for breakfast and asked him: "What time last night did you come in this morning?"

"It was three o'clock before I left the office."

"Well, what kept you so long?"

"I did not get my cash balanced before that time. I was looking for four and a half pennies all night and I could not find them, so I made my cash balance by taking some out of my pocket and putting them into the cash box."

Next morning, his employer asked him why he did not get around to open the store at six o'clock.

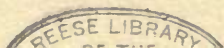
"I was all night here trying to balance cash and could not," said George, in a disgusted tone.

"Well," said Mr. Bullis, "cash is hard to find when it's stolen. I took the four and a half pennies out of the drawer to see if you were accurate and faithful. I am glad to see you did try to find it."

"Yes, I was from six P. M. until three o'clock looking for it, and I will now pay myself double time for the overtime I worked and charge it to you, Mr. Bullis, for if I am not true to myself, how can I be true to others."

Mr. Bullis walked away and made no answer.

Days passed and came and George Lewis was at his desk, but months behind on his books. He



hated the work, consequently could make no headway. Bills were sent back daily for correction; bank was overdrawn, because accounts were not posted and Old Nick was to pay, in general. George Lewis was far too careless and not quick enough for his position, consequently, chaos was reached at last. When the New Year came, he was told to get his books ready for inventory, but it would be July before he could do it. He worked night and day at them, but no use.

"George," said his employer, "when will you have the Balance Sheet ready?"

"I do not know," said George, with a look of despair on his face."

"Must have it soon, or will have to get some one to help you at your expense," said his employer, harshly.

"All right, sir, I am willing."

That night George Lewis worried over his books and was much chagrined by the taunts of the shipping clerks, for they took pleasure in saying to him that Mr. L'Estrange always got his books posted at five o'clock and was ready to go home when the bell rang.

"George," said the head shipping clerk, "why don't you eat some of those powder crackers, they'll put life in you."

When six o'clock came that day, all hands walked out of the store. George Lewis followed, but for-

got to lock the safe or put in his books. His heart was sad, for he was now so deeply in work, he did not see his way out. When he reached home, his mother asked him what was the matter:

"You look sick and tired," she said.

Supper over, George went to bed and soon was sleeping soundly, dreaming of his cash and books, when his sister rushed into his room, calling out:

"George, 196 Water Street is in flames and it is feared the Bullis building will soon be on fire."

George got up and looking out of the window, could plainly see the fire sending its lurid flames over the Bullis building. Putting on his clothes, he ran down the street towards the store, which was now one seething mass of fire and black clouds of smoke rolled up into the heavens. Tongues of fire leaped out of the darkness and illumined the neighboring streets, making a scene of awesome splendor.

George stood looking on as motionless as the lamp post, when up to him, rushed his employer.

"George," he exclaimed, "were the insurance papers all renewed January 1st?"

"What insurance papers?" said George. "I didn't touch them."

"My God, I am ruined! They all ran out January first, and I haven't one penny on my building or stock. I am a ruined man. I am ruined, also my creditors and my wife, whose money I borrowed

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last January. My God!" he exclaimed, "what shall I do?"

Next morning a message flashed over the wire from Dublin:

"Having heard of the disaster which has fallen upon you, His Lordship and I extend, with our blessing, our most sincere sympathy. J. F. Straughan."

That night, George Lewis rolled on his bed and could not sleep. He would say to himself: "Am I the Jonah, or has Mr. Bullis displeased God that this visitation should be sent upon him. I cannot recall any act of mine that would deserve such austere punishment. I will ask Mr. Bullis what he has done, that such a dire calamity should fall upon him."

Next morning, they found the safe open and all its contents destroyed, but the desk had fallen before the books were burned. They fell from it and were safely buried in the water which the firemen threw upon the building.

"So much saved, anyway, but what good are the books when the insurance policies have all expired," said Mr. Bullis to himself, as he wrung his hands and looked at the smouldering building, with tears coursing down his worried cheeks. Neighbors and friends called at the Bullis home that evening to extend their sympathy to their unfortunate friend and neighbor, among them, the rector of the church

that the Bullis family, for five generations, had attended. He told Mr. Bullis not to grieve, that the Lord would bring it out all right.

"Whom He loveth, He chasteneth. Cheer up, my brother, all will yet be well with you. Have you asked Jackson & Lansing, the insurance agents, when your policies ran out?"

"Yes, I did today, and they telephoned me back, January the first."

The parlor and drawingroom were crowded when the door bell rang, and a card from a newspaper reporter was handed the attendant with the words:

"Please hand this to Mr. Bullis and say to him I want to see him for a moment."

Mr. Bullis came, and the representative of the New York World, said, in a voice trained for the occasion:

"Mr. Bullis, I am sorry to hear that you met with such a serious loss. How much stock had you on hand? How much were you insured for?"

"I had about twenty thousand pounds in stock, beside the building, and not one cent insurance on either—all ran out last January."

"Too bad, too bad," said the scribe, and he bowed himself out.

Next morning the article appeared in the New York World, and Abner's eyes fell upon the lines:

"Bullis, the fishmonger on Water Street, Liverpool, England, totally destroyed by fire. Loss

about \$150,000. No insurance—expired last January.”

“That is not so,” said Abner to himself, “I ordered the insurance renewed, and have in my trunk a receipt from Jackson & Lansing representing the different companies, agreeing to renew for another year, without notice, the policies in their companies. I also paid them fifty pounds on account of renewal and have their receipt. Are they trying to swindle poor old Bullis out of his insurance? Well, I will not allow them; I’ll telegraph Bullis at once.”

He left his desk and rushed over to the telegraph office and sent the following message across the briny deep:

“To Nelson Bullis, Liverpool, England:

“Your insurance has not run out. I renewed it for one year from January first. See my letter of today. Show this to Jackson & Lansing. Abner L’Estrange (without recommend).”

Words cannot describe the feelings of joy, gratitude and affection that took hold of the heart of Nelson Bullis as he read the cablegram to himself.

“I’ll run home and show my wife and neighbors and tell them of my good luck,” and he dashed away down the street, blind to the people he passed, until he was stopped by the World’s reporter, whose pencil drivers are always on the

alert for the latest, and asked if there was anything new.

"Yes, a great deal of good news," said Mr. Bullis, excitedly, "my insurance policies are all in force. Abner L'Estrange, my former bookkeeper, has saved me from ruin. He had them renewed for another year. Wasn't it good! I wish he would come back and work for me now, and no power on earth could persuade me to let him go. He had his work all finished at 4 p. m., every day, and Lewis will never be able to do it alone. I will ask him back just as soon as I get ready to open."

"Father," said his daughter Mabel, in sarcastic tones, "how can Mr. L'Estrange get employment in the United States, without your recommend, which you denied him at the dictation of his enemies?"

"Please, Mabel, do not chide me for it now; I thought I was doing right."

"Father," she continued, "is it not written somewhere, 'Be just and fear not.'"

"I know, my child, but in business, we have to be politic."

"We should always be just," she added with emphasis.

Mabel had from the first secretly loved Abner and he reciprocated her affection. When he left Liverpool he sent her a note saying he would write her when he found employment in the New World,

and he did, several times, but her ever-watchful mother consigned them to the flames of the coal fire in the kitchen, and they never reached their destination, but did their end.

Mabel watched for days and weeks and months for the long looked for letter, which came not, and she wondered why Abner did not keep his word. When his telegram came to her father, she wrote him asking him why he did not write as agreed. He at once replied; said he had written several times, but got no answer. Mabel, by this time, commenced to suspect her mother, so she left word at the post office for her mail to be kept there until she personally called for it. She then got her welcome letters twice a week.

Nelson Bullis collected his insurance on the stock and building, and soon the store was in shape for business again.

Mabel left on July the first for Stockholm, Sweden, and while there, visited her uncle, Doctor Winston, at his summer home on the slopes, where she contracted typhoid fever, and while everything that affectionate care and medical science could do, was done for her, her young frame was rapidly burning up by the disease. She, knowing her end was nigh at hand, requested that Abner be asked to come from America and see his dear little girl for the last time this side the grave. Who could refuse such a dear one, such a kind, sweet face?

Certainly not the noble-hearted Abner, whose soul was yearning to see her, and whose life was wrapped up in her, on whom all his future hopes centered.

He sailed from New York on July the eighth, and reached Sweden July the fifteenth, at noon. He at once went to her bedside and found her repeating the beautiful lines of Richard Lovelace:

“‘If I have freedom in my love, and in my soul am free, angels, alone, who soar above, enjoy such liberty.’”

These lines must have sent a dagger into her mother's soul, for surely she remembered how she had sidetracked her daughter's freedom for years. The old lady, recognizing the laws of decorum, left them alone for awhile, and when they both recovered their equilibrium, Mabel said:

“Abner, my dearest and most noble darling, how I love to see you for even a little while. Come near to me and kiss me.”

He placed his strong arms around her neck, and as he raised her up to him, he felt the heat of her forehead, and then commenced to realize how sick his angel was. A look of intense grief and despair overspread his placid countenance, as he pressed her feverish face to his.

“My beloved,” he said, “look at me.”

As he bent over the beautiful, quiet figure, slowly and lovingly the fatigued lids were raised, one fond, faint smile, a semi-lifted hand; then, with a

moan, she sank back upon her pillow, muttering the words, "Precious one, stay with me." She sighed and soon was fast asleep.

In a few moments she awoke again, and seeing sorrow on Abner's face, she said:

"Be of good cheer, and do not let mother see you crying. I do not wish you to grieve so for me. I am not worth one of those precious tears," and as she spoke she stroked his smooth face with her pale, emaciated hand, and in her sublime effort to cheer her loved one, said: "I am not going to die; I will now live for your sake."

After saying this, she fell back again in a slumber. Her face was pink and pale, and Abner, fearing the end had come, called to her uncle and mother, who at once came to her bedside.

"Doctor, is she dead?" asked Abner, impatiently.

"No, my dear boy, she is only sleeping."

After a while, she awoke, and her face was an index to high fever. She once more stretched out her tiny hand to Abner, who took it tenderly in his, and for a few moments all was still, when she again went off in slumber.

The doctor now suggested that Abner and her mother take a walk in the open air before retiring for the night, for he feared an attack of the disease if they did not go out.

"Abner," said Mrs. Bullis, as they wandered along the graveled pathway under arched willows

and over rustic bridges which surrounded the Winston home, "my conscience has been troubling me. I wish to say to you it was I who burned your letters to Mabel, and I ask you now to forgive me. Won't you do it? I ask it for her sake," she continued, "you won't refuse me, will you? My love for Mabel prompted me to do it. I hated the thought of anyone ever taking her away from me. I want you now to know I had nothing against you, but I loved her too dearly to give her up."

"I hope we will all be forgiven," said Abner, reluctantly.

The moon was rushing past the clouds, as if it had a special message to deliver to each sister planet. As Abner and Mrs. Bullis walked along they gazed listlessly at this heavenly luminary's lunation, and thought only of her who rolled in feverish anguish on a bed of sickness in the home yonder.

"I wonder," said Abner to Mrs. Bullis, "if there is any chance of Mabel's recovery," as he wiped away a silent tear that trickled down his blanched cheeks.

"The doctor says she has no chance, and that it is only a matter of a few days to the end," said Mrs. Bullis, between her sobs, which shook her frame almost to convulsions. Abner could not restrain his feelings any longer, and he broke out in bitter weeping. The faithful dog at their heels

added his mournful lay to the cries of sorrow which floated on the midnight air, and an owl on a neighboring tree mingled his whoo with that of the mourners.

Abner and Mrs. Bullis reached the residence of Doctor Winston at last, as the clock in the hall rang out the wee, small hours of the morning.

"My," said Abner, "one o'clock! How time flies."

As they entered the house Mrs. Bullis said, in kindly tones, "John, show Mr. L'Estrange to his room," and turning to Abner, said "Good night," as she entered her room and closed her door.

"I hope things will look brighter in the morning," he murmured to himself.

The morning came and Abner got up early to see the sun rise over the horizon, and as he entered Mabel's room, it shone brightly in at the window. Glancing hastily around the room and at the sunbeams, he said to the doctor:

"Nice, bright morning, isn't it, doctor."

"Yes," answered the guardian of health, in tears, "but all is now dark to the gaze of Mabel. She is beholding the unveiled glory of the Sun of Righteousness; she is at peace at last. Beautiful, lovely character she was. We all will miss her; I could not have loved her more if she were my own child," said the doctor to the nurse, as he fondly gazed on the lovely face now still in death.

There were sad hearts at the Winston home that night, but none sadder than Abner, for her beautiful face, exquisite complexion, queenly form and carriage, crowned by a wealth of golden hair, was indelibly stamped upon his heart never to be effaced, and her unswerving devotion, loyalty and pure affection for him, were as true as the needle to the pole and enshrined her in the secret recesses of his core, there to stay until time is no more.

"I may in after years meet someone I love as much as I did her," meditated Abner, sadly, "but never will I meet another with such a pure, unselfish soul as she had."

She was laid with tears and flowers in the grave on the sunny slopes of Sweden, there to lie until all are called on the resurrection morn. Abner placed some forget-me-nots on the grave and wandered listlessly back to the house. Next day, he visited it again and found the following lines resting on the flowers which covered the grave:

Tread lightly, love, when over my head,
Beneath the daisies lying,
And tenderly press the grassy bed
Where the fallen rose lies dying.
Dreamless I sleep in the quiet ground,
Save when your foot-fall hearing,
My heart awakes to the old-loved sound,
And beats to the step that's nearing.

Bright shone the moon last eve—when you came,
Still dust for dust hath feeling—
The willow-roots whispered low the name
Of him who weeps while kneeling.

The lily-cup holds the falling tears,
The tears you shed above me;
And I know through all these silent years
There's some one still to love me.

Oh, softly sigh; for I hear the sound
And grieve me o'er your sorrow;
But leave a kiss in the myrtle mound—
I'll give it back tomorrow.

Whisper me, love, as in moments fled,
While I dream your hand mine taketh;
For the stone speaks false that says "She's dead;"
"I sleep, but my heart awaketh."

—DENNER STEWART.

Mr. and Mrs. Bullis sailed with him for Liverpool the following day, where he intended to take passage for the United States.

"Abner," said Mr. Bullis, "come, take charge of my business; I cannot trust Lewis again."

"Now, Mr. Bullis, give him another trial; he will be more careful in future. I'll have to bid you and Mrs. Bullis good bye."

After leaving Mr. and Mrs. Bullis, Abner hurried to catch the White Star Line steamer for New York. He reached Ismay, Emire & Company's office in time to secure a stateroom. This done, he proceeded at once to the dock, where he shipped for the United States. His heart was sad, but he kept it to himself, for he had by this time learned to hold his own council, and found out there were few people in the world he could trust with his secrets. The bell rang, and away moved the steamer headed for New York, shooting clouds of black smoke high into the heavens.

Abner looked around to see if he could see someone he knew; could not, so he went to his room and when supper was called, he was fast asleep. When he awoke, all sight of land had disappeared, and he was again on the bosom of the mighty deep. When he crossed before, he was too sick to think of any one; now—he was too sad to think of any but her whose body he had laid to rest in the bosom of mother earth on the beautiful hillsides of Sweden.

Half dazed with grief, he wandered over to the register book, and looking over the names, was surprised to find "J. F. Straughan, Dublin," "William M. Straughan, Dublin."

"Two sons of the high and mighty," he muttered to himself. "Well, I don't care to meet them, nor do they care for me, I suppose."

First day passed; second, third, fourth, also fifth, and Abner was ready for each meal—quite a contrast to his last trip.

“I will go for curiosity, and see how the youngsters are getting on. I wonder if they are sick.”

He hadn't long to wait, for the doctor of the vessel had just come out of their room and was talking to the steward about them.

“One of them,” he said, “is so ill I am afraid he will not be able to leave the vessel when she lands.”

“Poor fellow,” said Abner, who did not care to see the sins of the father visited on the children in such a severe manner.

“Seasickness is the most horrible of all sickness,” said Mr. Morely, a fellow passenger.

“I can indorse that statement,” said Abner, with a shrug of his shoulders. “I was sick all the way, on my last voyage, but I am now a full-fledged sea-dog; nevertheless, those who are sick have my most sincere sympathy.”

“Fog bells are ringing and we cannot get to dock today,” said Abner to a fellow passenger, “if it does not clear up.”

“Oh, young man, I hope you are mistaken, for I am expecting my family to meet me,” said Mr. Morely. “I do not care to stay here all night,” but fate and fog said stay, and stay they must.

The following morning was bright and clear, so

the vessel came steaming up by Sandy Hook, and soon the passengers were on their way to New York.

Abner, on walking up Broadway recognized the street Arab who had directed him to the Waldorf Astoria when he first landed. Now he was a prosperous fruit vendor and a leading ward politician. He and Teddy O'Brien ruled the "Ate" Ward and were for Tammany Hall against the World and its goody goodies.

Abner L'Estrange was soon back at his desk again, and the world went on as usual. Several months passed and Abner was wondering where the young Straughans got employment. Of course their father gave them his blessing, also a letter of introduction to some of New York city's Four Hundred.

"That would," said Abner, "aid them in the old world, but merit alone counts here, and that they haven't got, or I am no judge of human nature."

One morning as Abner was at work, a special delivery boy asked for him.

"I am he," said Abner.

"Well, sign here," said the servant of Uncle Sam, pointing to a certain line in his book. When he had signed, he handed him a letter which he opened, and scanning the signature, saw it was from Frederick Bullis, Mabel's only brother. It read as follows:

"Abner, for God's sake, come at once and see if you cannot do something to get us out. The Bishop's two sons and myself were taken in the Parkhurst raid on the Bowery and they will not let us go, and we have no one to go bail for us. Yours truly, Frederick Bullis."

"I'll go and see them," said Abner, "but I will not get my name in the papers, or stain myself with their crimes. When did Fred come over, I wonder?"

Abner reached the precinct just as the Captain was going out.

"Well, L'Estrange, what are you after this morning?" said the Captain dryly.

"I have a young friend in the toils," said Abner, "and I wish to see if I can get you to let him go."

The Captain turned and led the way back. When Abner spoke to Bullis, the Captain called to the officer in charge and said:

"What are the charges against this young man, and who made them?"

"The Parkhurst brigade fished him out of a dive on the Bowery this morning at four o'clock, and they will be here tomorrow to prosecute them," said the sergeant.

"I am sorry, L'Estrange," said the Captain, "that I cannot let them go with you. I would if I could; but I'll tell you what you can do—compel me to take them before a magistrate and there'll

be no one to prosecute them, and he will let them go."

"All right, said Abner, "all I want is Fred Bullis; I am not interested in the other two."

"L'Estrange," said the Captain, "take him along and I'll go ahead to see the magistrate."

"Oh, Abner," said Fred, "do not leave the Straughan boys in jail all day and night, take them too. Old boy, don't you remember how I carried your letters to Mabel contrary to mother's orders, and her's back to you. You said then, you would never forget me for it. Now, do this favor for me and we will count it square."

"Well, square let it be," said Abner, "come on boys. Sergeant, I'll take the three with me," and they all walked out and jumped on the first car, and were soon before the magistrate, who called out in dignified tones:

"Boys, what have you been doing?"

"Seeing the sights," said the sergeant, "and were caught in the Parkhurst net."

"Well, where are the agents?"

"Gone home, I suppose," said the officer, "and will probably be back tomorrow."

"Boys, you may go," said the Justice, "no one to prosecute you."

"Thank you," said the boys, all in one voice.

"I wonder," thought Abner, "if I am heaping coals of fire on the father's head, by this act."

"Where are you going, Fred?" said Abner.

"I am going home on the next steamer for Liverpool, and so are the Straughan boys."

"Well, then, meet me at the office at six o'clock and we will have a Yankee dinner together before you leave."

"All right," said they, and when six o'clock came they were there. The Straughan boys felt mean, for Fred had just told them how their father forced Abner to leave the British Isles because he would not say a child was regenerated or born again, but Abner said:

"Am I in the place of God that I should visit the sins of the father on the children? We all have enough of our own to answer for."

Abner's heart was as large as an ox's and the dinner was all that Delmonico could get up. Mumm's extra dry, and Dublin Stout flowed freely, and it was ten o'clock when the last course was over and the boys sang, "He's a jolly good fellow."

Next morning they sailed for Liverpool with grateful hearts to Abner, and vowed no one should ever in their presence say Abner L'Estrange was not the prince of good fellows.

Seven days from they left the dock Abner received a cablegram, "All safe; Fred."

Abner never again heard from the Bullis or

Straughan families, but he was always thankful he did not visit their father's sins upon them.

* * * * *

"Come, Abner," said his employer, "I want you to go to Albany and watch the Croker-Platt legislation, also the canal leeches. Keep your eye on the Amsterdam Avenue steal; also the dollar gas bill."

"All right; when do you want me to start?"

"Tomorrow morning, on the day boat."

Abner was up early, as was always his custom, and was ready to start on time for the capital of the Empire State. It was his first sail up the beautiful Hudson River, and he enjoyed it. Its peaceful waters were in strong contrast to the mighty and turbulent Atlantic, over whose wavy surface he three times, now, had sailed. About six p.m. he reached Albany and he domiciled at the famous Keeler's Hotel, where not alone is it the best place to get hot food, but hot politics are also dished up there. There, David B. Hill feeds his inner man, as well as directs the Democratic members in the legislature from its 'phone. David prefers this hostlery on account of being the only place where he is safe from the machinations of the female sex, as single gentlemen only are visible everywhere, as well as on the sign. Should the fair sex ever make a raid on David, he will act like Cervera's fleet at Santiago and run away and can

only be attacked from the rear. I doubt if they can ever land him, except they cut off his retreat to Wolfort's roost. I know this to be a fact, for I have seen old and young ladies trying to get a look at the ex-governor, ex-senator, would-be president, and I am a Democrat. He wheeled on his heel like a school boy's top in order to elude their gaze and save his heart from the would-be plunderers. Wolfort's Roost is a beautiful place. It was laid out, planned and built by the never-to-be-forgotten Fritz Emmett, the actor whose lullabies were often heard from its walks and shades, as they floated on the air down the valley to the Hudson River. Emmett's body, as well as the late President Arthur's, lie in the beautiful rural cemetery a little way beyond. The knowing ones say that the Honorable David B. Hill selected this residence so that he could keep one eye on Senator Murphy, of Troy, and the other orb on Judge D. Cady Herrick, of Albany. It might be, for it is in plain view of both cities and is likewise a silent place for politicians to put up jobs, like the Maynard returns and the defeat of William Jennings Bryan, or of Judge Van Alstyne.

When Abner started next morning for the legislative halls of the Capital, he found a motley crowd had gathered to fight the present labor business trading stamp act. Among them were several labor leaders and some manufacturers who were on their

last legs and wanted an excuse to die. Among them, Monroe over-estimated Woolcraft, whose eloquence was closely confined to his stomach. There, thickly coated with gall, it lay dormant, except when it caused this manufacturer to shake as if he had convulsions, or was afflicted with a bad case of worms. Moses W. Dodge, the shoe manufacturer, was always there and honestly there, for he believed prison competition was working ruin on his business. He showed by statistics and facts the injustice of prison labor with free labor. Next, was George Blair, a laboring man's friend—God bless the mark—from New York city, and the orator from Troy—for revenue only—who quietly asked Mr. Dodge if there was any money in it. On being told there wasn't, he had very important business to attend to and was sorry he had to leave them, "But," he added, "Mr. Dodge, I'm with you."

Abner at first thought the members of the Assembly and Senators were honest, but after a while, he found them introducing a bill one day, and next day lobbying against it. Cries of Lou Payne, the noted lobbyist, were heard on every side, and the hungry ones were like young sparrows in a nest—had their mouths open for the long green for their votes on bills, resolutions and investigations. Platt leaders were tearing Croker's representative to pieces; in their cultured indignation would say: "Was there ever such a scoundrel as the sage from

Wantage?" and Croker's Tommy Grady would reply, "Yes, the shadow from Tioga county." Tom Platt lived in former years on the banks of a beautiful river, where fish and water fowl abound, and in his boyhood days hunted and fished on its waters. Many a time, he followed the wild duck and her young and learned a lesson from her make-believe actions—a lesson which he and his followers now practiced with profit.

This boy, who was then like all boys—full of mischief—one day hunted the wild duck and her young, and at first he thought the mother's back, legs and wings were broken as she fluttered, seemingly helpless, along in the grass.

"Oh, I'll catch that duck in a minute; she's badly wounded. See how she cannot fly—no, nor even walk," and he sprang after her. Now he was beside her, and as he reached down to lift her up she scrambled a little further on. He again pursued her and reached for her, but she again fluttered on and on, until the perspiration rolled off him and he laid down all wet and exhausted on the grass. The duck, seeing now that her offspring were all safely hidden in the rushes and out of danger, shot, as if on magic wings, into the air, dropped a feather to the wily Tom with a squawk, and turning her neck, looked down at the future Senator—and, later on, Republican boss—and said, "Did you ever get left! Go way back and sit down!"

If he understood her he did not obey, but walked to where the canvas-back dropped the feather as she flew, thinking to carry it home and show his mother how near he was to game that day, but when he got there, he did not care for the feather; so, with rapid strides, he made for home, vowing vengeance on all the pinioned creatures of the air, land and water.

"Wait," he said to himself, "until my Legislature meets, and I'll rush a bill through both houses which will square you and I. You can laugh today, but my gun will soon laugh at you. If I cannot get a bill through on the game laws, I'll saddle a rider on to my State Constabulary which will end you."

Like the Constabulary Bill, his game bill never materialized. It was smothered in committee and the duck still swims on the lake in peace.

The lesson he learned was a hard one, consequently, never was forgotten. In later years, he pursued larger game—presidents, vice-presidents, governors, lieutenant-governors, judges, senators, assemblymen and ward heelers, all had their feathers taken out if they ever pulled off the rubber band from across their wings. He never uses a collar on his serfs—just pulls out the quill feathers if they ever violate any of his orders, which he always considers *ex-cathedra*. He often repeats to himself with swollen chest:

“ By me presidents and governors rule and judges do decree justice. I am he that said to Conklin, ‘ Me too.’ I am he that said to Governor Black, ‘ You are weighed in the balance and found wanting.’ I am he that said to Governor Cornell, ‘ I won’t have you at any cost; step down and out.’ I am he with my bow and arrow that slew James G. Blaine. I am he that made Cleveland, and afterwards gave him a ticket-of-leave. I am he that created and guided the Republican cyclone that buried bachelor David. I am he that put Billy Barnes in power in Albany County, and he holds well his trust. I am he who was so often killed, but it alive again. I am he that resigns in June, hangs on in December, blooms out at Spring elections and gathers the fruit in the Fall. I am he that does not care on what platform I gather in the golden eagle, or how it comes to me—by express or through a security company. I act sometimes like St. Paul, ‘ All things to all men’—that’s before election; but I am like Mike McCarthy, sometimes, after election, who, in his speech, said: ‘ Jintlemin, I kissed your feet, regardless of odor, before iliction; you may kiss mine now—until next iliction.’ Tom Platt, however, rarely ever makes a promise but he keeps, nor a threat but he executes; and herein lieth the secret of his tremendous power, and it is gaining in strength, instead of waning, as some try to make

themselves believe who wish for selfish reasons to see him fall."

This passage of words, though, was just to keep the eye of the public off the Platt-Crocker combination and it served its purpose. Until recently, Justice Jerome sent his fiery dart into the joints of their armor, dividing asunder two great leaders of that unholy alliance. Abner now could see where Platt practiced the make-believe tactics learned from the wild duck in his youth, for when a cry was raised and the people were about to go for him and his followers, he would feign all his power was gone and that his friends were all turned against him. Like the dissembling wild duck, he would pretend debility and prostration, and for the time being, would give up all and his enemies would reach for his scalp with joy. He would scramble on and on, however, until all his offspring were hid and their tracks covered; then, like the wild duck, the opportune moment came and he would show his power, make his own peculiar noise, perfectly understood by his followers, and in a short time, all the family were happy together again. The storm had passed, the people's eyes were turned from the real object of their fury, and the wolf and the lamb once more lay down together. Resignations, investigations, condemnations, and everything but nominations, were forgotten, and the wily but truthful Tom was on the box again and the Republican

machine was in good working order with a first-class coachman for whip. The assaults made on the leaders of both parties by the Opposition, may have hoodwinked and blindfolded others, but Abner's vision was then clear and he could see, like Johnny Murphy of old, bad on both sides. The Raines law slipped through unnoticed by the public, and Croker and Platt had the big game between them, so they decided to divide the territory. All bonds below Harlem Bridge were to be issued by Crocker Company, and all above by Tom Platt's Company, so what Dick hadn't, Tom had.

Abner got disgusted watching the movements of Senators, wire pullers and lobbyists who looked to him like the Irishman's flea, "Now you have them and now you haven't." He sought an opportunity to go into business, which he soon found, and in a little while, he was well established and had unlimited credit with manufacturers and banks. His business increased daily under his ever-watchful eye, and thoughts of failure for him were never even dreamed of.

"I shall move from this street and give all my attention to my own business," he was heard to say, and he did.

One day, as he was on his tour squaring up his accounts, he met her who, one year after, became his wife.

She was tall, of a kind disposition and made a

most faithful wife, until influenced against him by her brother Barney, or "By."

"By" was one of those individuals whom nature puts on the world for spite; he was small, round-shouldered, stooped and bow-legged. His gait gave him a monopoly on that kind of carriage. He walked along with one shoulder higher than the other, and instead of faced front, he put his shoulder to the wind, which, to say the least, gave him a grotesque appearance. His feet were fastened like water-fowls'—wide to the toes; and his face resembled a yellow globe turnip which the chickens had picked. In complexion, he closely resembled the corncob. His nose was neither Grecian, Dutch, nor Roman, but looked like a piece of daub which a schoolboy had thrown at him and it stuck there. He, several years before, left his name on the police blotter for a crime of the lowest grade. The defense he offered was even more diabolical than the crime, and people who knew his partners in business, would exclaim:

"Why don't they put that little monster out?"

And they did. He found his way to a Western city, but he had a hard road to hoe, for like the Upas tree, his presence blasted everything his shadow fell on. Like Cain, the mark of the beast was on his forehead, but, like the serpent, his machiavelian nature caught a mate, and woe to her. She was like St. Paul, "Had to die daily."

Starvation constantly stared her in the face, while it was no uncommon thing for the angels of the town to call on her for their cuff buttons which her licentious husband put in his pocket the night before. Such treatment and shame soon compelled her womanly nature to rebel, and she sought relief from the court; and now, she blesses the stars in her zenith that she is no more associated with the monster who, like Bonner, makes a pastime of inflicting misery on his fellow creatures. She is off, but another victim to his charms is hoodwinked and ruined. She falls a prey to his lust, and then he sinks to his lowest depth, puts her up to place the blame on a respectable physician in the Northwest, who is father of a family.

"Go," said this unprincipled lump of animated mud, to her, one day, "demand that he give you medical aid and five hundred in cash, and bring me back two hundred and fifty of it for my share."

She obeyed, and two days afterwards gave him the amount.

"That is right," he said, clapping her on the back, as he walked over the street to the opposite side.

Next he showed up in New York and there he followed his villainous deeds. Another victim to his pretensions and wiles is in the Mohawk Valley. If blood this coward dared not shed, blood he

bled severely, having, like a Western cyclone, caused ruin in his wake.

He, one morning, put his unwelcome nose—bless the mark—into Abner's home. His sister fed and clothed him. Scarce was he seated when he commenced his infamous, underhanded work. The home which heretofore knew no disputes, was almost rent assunder. Not daring to carry his nefarious deals any further at Abner's home, he persuaded his sister to meet him in New York, where they completed their plans for Abner's ruin. He was to supply the brains and she the money.

He soon pretended that he was carrying on a big business, and had a lot of goods on hand.

"Money, money," was his cry in every mail. "I'll soon have enough to run the business."

She, knowing him of old, had some doubts of his honesty, so she said to Abner:

"I'll go to New York city with Margaret and see what 'By' is at."

Well, "By" was at his old tricks, and she couldn't find "By," goods, or the money; so she wrote Abner. It was good bye to "By" and cash, and returning home she said that was the last time she would be swindled by him.

But it was not; he would do it again and again. His kind-hearted and noble sister in the West, who had fed and clothed him for many years, now was tired of him, and someone had to feed this good-

for-nothing ; for things of that kind are like cripples and bastards—they never die. Like the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and like the thistle in the field, they are sent for a purpose ; but like rats, mice, fleas and bed-bugs, we poor mortals have to stand their bites and stings and can see no good in them.

Days rolled on. This fiend incarnate lived in luxury on what he had stolen from Abner and his sister. No more was heard of him, until his sister left Abner in the West, to put in her claim against Abner's estate, which was now in the trustee's hands. Abner had put his money into the Carson River Mining Company, and like others, lost all. His failure brought on a severe illness and he could not attend to his business any more.

Inquiries came, but to all she was directed by "By" to answer :

"He is not mentally, morally, or financially able to attend to your bill ; put in your claim."

Days passed and came, but no word from her to Abner for three weeks. He was sick and alone. He would write to her daily, but no reply, for "By" and his sister now were making preparations to rob him, if any was left after the creditors were satisfied.

One day he got a letter unsigned :

"Send all cash, notes and papers to me, and we will settle for you."

And he did, and for six months after, he did not

hear from them. She, now seeing his poverty and broken health, resolved to keep what she had and get rid of him. He was nervous and irritable, and she thought she could work him up to a point where she could make out he was insane and have him incarcerated as a lunatic in some asylum.

Abner, not hearing from her, worried himself sick, and for days he rolled in bed alone on Piedmont Heights, no one to cheer or comfort him. But he thought not of himself, but of her whom he mourned as sick in New York. Doctor Thaur, when he heard of his illness, came to him and did all that could be done for him. He recovered at last and resolved to go East.

It grieved him sorely to break up his little home in this beautiful spot, which nature and man had made. Piedmont is the most healthy and beautiful spot on earth. It is about three miles from Oakland, and reached by the Oakland electric cars. A syndicate has purchased almost all the land and are beautifying it all the time. Piedmont has a beautiful park and club house. The park is the finest in Alameda County. It is tastefully and artistically laid out, with walks under shade trees, along running brooks. Its entrance is one mass of plants and shrubs, all kept in the finest order. Nature did a lot for Piedmont. Her sulphur and pure spring water are a blessing. Man, also, has treated her kindly and helped her very much on the road to

perfection. In a few years it will be a perfect spot. The people in Piedmont are kindness personified, and the stranger who comes within their gates will surely regret leaving them.

When Abner told them he was going East they loaded him down with good things to eat on the way, among them, a rooster and some boiled eggs, with a good bottle of wine to wash it down. Mr. M. T. House and his kind-hearted, as well as beautiful wife, contributed these towards his comfort from the most noble as well as kindly motives, but it was very near getting Abner into trouble.

Scarce had he boarded the train, when a smoked Irishman called to him:

"What have you in the bundle?"

"A fine rooster and some nice eggs," was Abner's innocent reply.

"Take them to the baggage car," said the dusky son of Africa.

Abner did not relish the suggestion and said:

"Not by a d—n sight. I would not trust the baggage man with such a precious morsel; I'll keep them where I can keep my eye on them."

"I'll see whether you will or not," said the hiring of the Southern Pacific monopoly.

Abner now felt like the fox in the fable. He feared they would take his rooster and eggs away from him, also his wine, so he made ready for the fray. He had not long to wait, for into the car

with stately step came the conductor, and with the strut of a turkey gobbler, he advanced towards Abner and his rooster.

"I am C. P. Huntington," was plainly visible on his face, or, I should have said, he had as much luggs on as if he were president of the road. He was closely followed by the special conductor and three brakemen, one kitchen walloper and two attendants out of the feed car. He evidently anticipated trouble and thought he would not come single handed.

"Take that rooster out of this passenger car," he said, in anything but a prayer-meeting voice. "This is not a cattle car; or, if you don't, I'll have it removed."

Abner, who was anything but an infant, squared himself up to over six feet tall, with forty-eight inches chest, and said in a mild and gentlemanly voice:

"If any man lays hands on me or my rooster, the rooster will not be the only corpse in the car."

This lord of all creation turned on his heel, followed by his understrappers, and amidst the jeers of the passengers, walked out of the car. All but the poor rooster enjoyed the humiliating spectacle the gentleman with the brass buttons presented as he led his gang of dumb tools out of view of the passengers, who were now screaming with laughter, and saying, "Go way back and sit down."

The train moved out of Oakland amidst trees, shrubs and plants in full bloom, and wheat fields twelve inches high, to rush, before noon the same day, into a snow bank on the Sierra Nevada mountain range. We travelled under snowsheds, where the blackest night is midday compared with the darkness that prevails under those roofed valleys in the mountains. Once more in the light, we were flying around rocks, over canyons miles deep. The Rocky Mountains lay in the distance covered with the emblem of spotless purity—beautiful snow—making them look to the observer like huge animals asleep with white counterpane covers on them, while the sun shone on them, making water run down their sides like perspiration off a beast of burden under African sun. “Grand,” “awe-inspiring,” were heard from the passengers on every side.

Amidst all these grandeurs and changes of scenery the passengers grew hungry and commenced to inquire for the dining car. We left it at Sacramento; will take one on at Denver again. The rooster was now all gone, for Abner had divided it up with his neighbors, and “Many hands made light work.” Abner was now indeed hungry.

“Ten minutes for refreshments,” sang out the copper-colored son of Ham, at the next station.

Just as his melodious voice died on the mountain air, a roar like near-by thunder sent the cold chills

down the spinal columns of the passengers, and down from the mountain tops rolled a massive rock which fell within a few rods of the flying engine. The ever watchful pilot of the iron horse realized his danger at once, sent a loud, shrill whistle down the valleys for help, applied the brakes with alacrity, which caused the cars to bump, bump, and almost jump the track into the river below. Women fainting, children squalling, and in a few minutes, workmen over the cars were crawling.

"All excitement," said Pat. "We're anchored for a day and a 'nite' anyway," said the unconsoled son of the Isle of bogs and blarney.

The passengers were now all in earnest prayer, among them, Abner, whose prayer was that the rooster might come back to him.

Pat walked up and down the car, muttering to himself, "I'll be late for me job; some other son of a gun will get it before I get there."

"Why don't you pray, Pat," said a clerical-looking individual, whose collar resembled a tub hoop.

"I'd rather have a few pounds of dynamite at that rock than all the prayers in Chrystendom," said Pat, as he secreted the little end of a tobacco cake in his mouth and commenced to ruminate on it.

After three hours a tender came with dynamite and the rock was blown to pieces and thrown into the river below.

"All aboard," said the trainmen, and we were on our way around the mountain foot, over immense prairies, heading for the long-looked-for "Ten minutes for refreshment" establishment, which we reached at last.

The passengers rushed out of the car and went straight to the dining-room door, where plainly could be seen, "Pay as you go in."

"Fifty cents, please," said the man with his face in a muff, who stood at the gate to see you give up your money before you enter.

Just as the last passenger entered and had paid her half dollar, the conductor sang out, "All aboard," and "all aboard" it was.

Abner, seeing the trick, stood upon a high chair and in stentorian tones, said:

"Fellow passengers: we haven't strength enough to hold the train. I move we take all in sight with us, except that whiskered old varmint at the door."

As if inspired, every man grabbed the food in front of him, rushed for the door and got safely aboard.

The conductor came along and said all would be arrested at next station.

"Well, let it be so," said Abner. "I move, fellow passengers, that we club in here, hire a lawyer and have this conductor and the restaurant keeper indicted and punished for conspiracy."

"Be jabbers," said Pat, "Mister, I am a poor

working man, but I'll give you ten dollars to punish the swindlers."

Soon, two hundred was pledged, but was not needed. The conductor read the handwriting on the wall and no arrests were made.

Now, we were gliding over plain, prairie and crag, and soon would reach Denver. Our most substantial food for many hours was hope, sandwiched by swearing at the ticket agents in San Francisco, who sold us tickets and guaranteed a dining car all the way.

Denver, at last, was reached, and all got out for a walk and square meal. When they got on board again, they were like the camels in the desert of old, loaded with good things to eat—meat, fruit and bread, with a little mountain dew from Kentucky, and the mingled souls of wheat and corn from Milwaukee. But all this preparation was not needed, for the dining car was put on and not taken off again until we reached Chicago; or if it was, another was put on.

We reached Chicago about six p.m., and Abner put up at the Grand Pacific for the night. In the morning he intended to make a short call on his cousin who lived at No. 6036 Monroe Avenue. That night Abner did not sleep, and when morning came, instead of waiting to see his relatives, he took the first train for New York, and was met at the depot by his brother-in-law.

When he asked how his wife was, he was told she was sick at a boarding-house about two miles out, and that he could not see her that night. Abner had been given to understand that his wife was dangerously ill and that was the reason she could not answer his letters, but the morning dawned and all the fog was driven away.

Delilah, Abner's wife, was not sick, but was up in Albany putting up a job with Abner's creditor's to ruin him for life. This weak-minded, foolish and deceitful woman was working, as she herself said, under orders from her brother "By." She, who at the altar had sworn to love Abner, was now playing the part of her illustrious namesake who betrayed Samson. "By." telegraphed her that Abner was here and for her to come. She came, and the traitorous look was indelibly written on her face. Cold as a marble figure, she said to Abner:

"What made you come East? We could get along without you very well."

That was true, so they could, if they could only get money enough, for now she was transformed by her brother into "a wife for what I can get out of my husband to keep brother 'By.' and myself."

The fountain of her love for Abner had been choked up by her brother's lies and treachery. She hated him with all her soul, and daily wished him dead, and so expressed herself to him. Heartless is no name for her treatment of him. In order to

carry out her brother's scheme, she told the neighbors she twice saved him from self-destruction, but Jaspar, a youth of sixteen summers, exclaimed:

"How could you do that? Mr. L'Estrange is a powerful man, and you are a weak and feeble woman."

"Well, I did it, Jaspar."

But it did not go down, for Jaspar was one of those who were on to the schemes and condemned them. He heard herself and brother plot against the innocent husband's life—plots that make the Rye House pale into insignificance, but Abner knew of them beforehand and they were all cut in the bud, for this Guy Fawkes was caught in all his schemes and she was now beginning to look on him with suspicion again.

So one day she followed him into his office and found, while she was paying his board with the cash that she had taken from her husband, he was keeping a typewriter for business known to all in the building.

Mad as a March hare she left him and promised she would no longer steal money from her husband to pay Mrs. Oliver Cromwell her immoral brother's board. Had she the backbone to do right? Well, no; for next week Abner caught her paying his board again. This, in his poverty, made him angry, and he forbade her, and she promised not to do it again; but she did.

They now saw they could not rob Abner by inches, so determined to take all from him and leave him. Jaspar Cromwell told Abner that they were putting up a job, they and a widow lady with her husband alive, to live in a house where Abner knew not, and they were to go tomorrow, three of them, to look for it. Abner, knowing this, asked Delilah where she was going, and she answered:

"I am going with a lady up stairs on her business."

"Cannot I go along?"

"We are going on special business for the lady up stairs, and you cannot come."

"Well, your brother is going," Abner said.

"No, he's not; no one but us two."

Now Abner knew she was telling an untruth, for Jaspar—in whom he had implicit confidence—told him the three were going. So, to catch her in the lie, Abner started out after them and he waited until "By." had purchased three tickets, and then came on the scene, much to her chagrin, and in her usual temper, when caught, she said, "He got three tickets for ten cents, through mistake, from the ticket agent. I told you only two were going."

Abner's confidence was fast giving way, and he now could see his wife in her true colors. She was selfish, unreliable, unprincipled, as well as dishonest to him, and he now knew it, and he watched

every move she or her good-for-nothing brother made.

It was Abner's custom to go out early for a walk and get back when Mrs. Cromwell had breakfast ready. One morning, Jaspar suggested that Abner listen on the stairs and he would hear their plot when they thought he was gone out. He had not long to wait, for "By." called to Delilah, asking if she were awake.

"I am."

"Is Abner there?"

"No, he's gone out for a walk. I hope something may happen the lunatic before he gets back."

"Well, Delilah, I have thought of a scheme, and I am sure if it is properly carried out, it will end him."

"Poison him, I suppose?"

"Oh, no, I would not do that; we'd get caught."

"Nothing will be done to him to injure him," she said; "he is sick and ought to be cared for by his own people. I asked him yesterday why he didn't go to his own sister, and he answered, 'I will, if you don't care for me any longer, go to my cousin's in Washington and they will take care of me.' I hate them, and I will not let them have him, for they might make me give up what I stole from him. I cannot get any more out of him, so I will not care for him any longer. I never did love him,

but just married him because our brother was so mean to me."

"Now, sister," said "By." with his old-time love (?) "my scheme is this: I was talking to our friend, Dr. Schorharie, and if we pay him he will see he is put into a lunatic asylum. Now, it is better for us to give the doctor a nice sum than have to give him up all if he settles with his creditors. I will also see some of those who owe him and make them liberal propositions to swear he is insane. They will do it. There is C. H., R. R. and A., any one of them will be glad to swear his liberty away for a reduction in their bills."

He counted without his host, for while they had some difference with Abner, they would not injure him for anything.

"Now," he continued, "I do not know of any better way than for you to provoke him so he will strike you, and I will then have him arrested as a dangerous lunatic, and you will be rid of him."

"Oh, he will not strike me."

"You strike him, and spit in his face and see if he does not."

"I cannot do that; he always was so kind and good to me; I cannot do it."

"You must," he said, and stamped his foot on the floor; "I insist upon it."

Abner shut his teeth hard, and nothing would have given him more true delight than to go in and

end the career of this inhuman demon; but like Topsy, for the present he lay low for a more convenient season.

That day about ten a.m. she slapped her husband's face and spit upon him, but he knew it wasn't she who did it, but her brother, for she was absolutely under his control.

Abner only laughed and said:

"I heard him tell you to do that. I will not hold you responsible for it."

She then became hysterical and worked herself up to a frenzy. After she cooled down, Abner said to his wife:

"I want some money to go to Albany."

"I can give you no money, I haven't any."

He then took his watch that he had carried for twenty years and put it in the pawn shop for twenty dollars, and went to Albany to find "By." there, going around industriously circulating that Abner was insane, and their friend, "for revenue only," Dr. Schoharie, could not decide until he found out who would give him the most money.

Abner also cut this scheme in the bud by getting a certificate from an expert on mental diseases, but "By." had already pledged his honor that Dr. Schoharie would be paid.

By the way, his honor when well pledged, must have somewhat the same odor as limburger cheese.

"By." called at the various friends and enemies

of Abner during the day, but did not find much consolation or encouragement.

Night came, and Abner got back to his wife to find she had instructions to leave him, but she had not, as yet, obeyed, but had formulated a scheme to get rid of Abner so she could get away without any unpleasantness. Abner knew it all, but could not prevent it. He coaxed and entreated his wife not to leave him, when he was poor in health and pocket, but selfishness carried the day and he was left like the man who traveled into a far country and fell among thieves, penniless, friendless and alone. She, to whom he never denied anything, now that he was poor, sickly and miserable, left him to his fate. She, whom he watched over during her illness, now preferred her brother's company to his. She, who in the scorching summer months, could bask in the ocean breeze on the New Hampshire coast, while Abner poured out his sweat at home in business, now wished only for the death of her husband and benefactor.

Abner, in these moments, would exclaim: "Oh, cruel fate, curst be the day you guided my feet to her home."

Backward, turn backward, O Time in your flight,
Make me a child again just for tonight;
Mother, come back from the echoless shore,
Take me again to your heart, as of yore;

Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care,
Smooth the few silver threads out of my hair;
Over my slumbers your loving watch keep,
Rock me to sleep, mother, rock me to sleep.

Backward, flow backward, O tide of the years,
I am so weary of toil and of tears,
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain,
Take them, and give me my childhood again.
I have grown weary of dust and decay;
Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away;
Weary of sowing for others to reap;
Rock me to sleep, mother, rock me to sleep.

Tired of the hollow, the base, the untrue,
Mother, O mother, my heart calls for you.
Many a summer the grass has grown green,
Blossom'd and faded, our faces between;
Yet, with strong yearning and passionate pain,
Long I tonight for your presence again.
Come from the silence so long and so deep,
Rock me to sleep, mother, rock me to sleep.

—E. A. ALLEN.

“By.” had made arrangements with the commercial agencies in Boston to get the books, consequently he came to Albany to look them over—a privilege which was denied him when he got there. He went to the referee for an order on the trustee, and when order was served on a trustee, he tele-

phoned counsel, who instructed him to throw Woolcraft out of the window if he dared look at the books. Woolcraft did not care so long as he was getting twenty dollars from his sister for expenses and it only cost him eight. He was now so used to being kicked that his hide was as thick as that on his long-eared relation, so he went back to New York, told his sister he had done miracles, accomplished wonders, and that Abner was hated, while every one respected him and sympathized with her.

The workmen were moving quickly down the streets of Jersey City, as "By." called to Delilah to tell her he had another scheme on hand—one that he knew would sink Abner so deep he never could get his name back.

"What is it," she asked.

"Well, while he is sick, let us steal his trunk, books and papers and all else that is in it, hide them where he cannot get them. You know I have the storage receipt and I can have it removed to any place we think best."

Delilah's secret conscience quailed at this injustice to a man struggling against death and adversity, and she said:

"Oh, no, don't do that; that is too cruel for even a Woolcraft."

"Well, it will be done."

"Well, what good will that do us?"

"Why, keep him from getting the settlement with

the creditors ratified by the court, and then he cannot collect what we owe him or what we stole from him. Understand?"

"But, 'By.,' the poor fellow is sick and we had better not do it; it is not right to take advantage of him while he is so weak. I sometimes think that I ought to send for his cousin to come and take care of him. God may punish us for it later on."

"By." got angry at this and said:

"Well, look at how G. A. Woolcraft robbed his brother Mortimer, and God never punished him; he died worth millions."

"How do you know he didn't? How do you know but his life was a living hell, and his death a jump into eternal darkness, gloom and despair? And suppose he did escape punishment on this earth, look how he will feel on the Judgment morn when he looks on his brother whom he wronged so grievously, and look at those who inherit his wealth, and look at those who joined them and all that has befallen them."

"C. B. Woolcraft, the son of the man who took Mortimer's place, was suddenly sent into eternity while oiling his stock preparing it for quick sale. His death, you might look upon as a Godsend, for it saved the State the ignominy of sending by wire a current to dispatch him."

"You also know, that scarce had Frank been engaged to Miss Slater a month before she lost one

of her eyes, and it was looked upon then, and now is, as an omen sent from God to her not to make that unholy alliance. 'Come out from among them and be not partaker of their sins, for I will cut off from the house of Woolcraft, all the male children like I did in the days of Jereboam, the son of Nebat.' "

"Well, Delilah, your argument doesn't strike us; we have nothing to fear in that line, for all our family are like a desert, consequently, God cannot visit our sins upon them."

"Yes, but even then, we are not all dead yet; we may yet be punished, and if we are not in this world—if we keep on doing wrong—we surely will be in the next."

"Is it not written," he said, "The wicked prosper like a green bay tree?"

"Yes, 'By.,' and it is also written that 'the servant of the prophet was well and clean, and in one moment he was changed to a leper as white as snow. 'By.,' please, do not do any more against him, for he is so sick, lonely and sad, my heart aches for him."

"I told you I would do it, and no use in you talking, it will be done," so he left her and came to his lawyer's office—an unprincipled will-o'-the-wisp from the Northwest—and laid the plan before him. He, of course, said, "Capital thing; great mind,

Woolcraft," for this creature was in it for what he could get out of them.

"Where is the one hundred and fifty dollars you agreed to give me Saturday?"

"This is only Tuesday, man," said "By." with a smile.

"Oh," said the recent annex to New York State bar, "you meant next Saturday, did you? Well, next Saturday will do, my good fellow." And it is next Saturday every week since, and will until the millenium comes again, for "By." never paid any one; at least, so said Sam Blood from the Dutch capital and several others. Now the lawyer called his stenographer and dictated the following letter:
To United States Referee:

DEAR SIR:—I ask you to deny a ratification of the compromise agreement between Abner L'Estrange and his creditors, on the ground that he has not complied with the statute, in that he has secreted in the City of New York, his trunk, books and papers, in order to hinder, delay and defraud his creditors.

Yours respectfully,

F. A. DARWIN, the missing link or attorney for the dead man's claim."

"This is done. Now, Woolcraft, are you sure you have the books and trunk secreted where they will not get it? He will fight us hard, you know, and if he should get well he will surely look around and try and find them, and if we are caught with

them it would mean two years' board and room for both of us."

"Well," said Woodcraft, "I'll tell you how I got them; I got my sister, Delilah, to work on his feelings so that she could get the storage receipt for them from him, and she did, and I sent a man for the trunk, and he left it on a certain corner. Then I telephoned to another expressman and he put it in another storehouse and they are there, and I defy him in his present physical condition to trace them."

"Well, if we can keep them out of his reach we will beat him, if he doesn't pay us well to give them up. How would it be to strike him now for all he can scrape? Let us go to Albany tomorrow; get fifty dollars from his wife to pay our expenses while we skin her husband."

"Agreed," said "By." "He is sick and weak and you would frighten him into it. Good day; will call in time to catch the boat for Albany tomorrow. So long."

Now he went to his office and got a story up to tell Delilah so as to get the fifty dollars for expenses, for it was her nature to cling on to the cartwheel until the eagle screamed on it. The story now ready—like his first parent, the serpent in the garden of Eden, he strangled the truth.

When he entered the boarding-house that night, she came to meet him and asked if there was anything new from Abner.

"No, only that he has another woman on the string, just as I told you."

"Who is it?" she said, impatiently.

"Well, I don't want to mix up in your dirty scrape; I won't give her name. I tell you, Delilah, he is a scoundrel, and we must take what he has and get clear of him. Now, I have to meet a man on a southern water deal tomorrow in which I am interested a half a million dollars, and next day—no matter what comes—I am going to Albany and have it out with that rascal. I am going to take Frank, the lawyer, along, and we will squeeze him, sure. You must let us have fifty dollars to pay our expenses, and when I turn all Florida which I own (in my mind) into cash, I'll let you have all you want."

She parted with the fifty dollars and he chuckled with delight, as he now was sure of another week's food.

Next night this unprincipled, double-dyed black-mailer and his attorney were on their way to Albany, desecrating the beautiful Hudson river with their contaminating presence. They telegraphed Abner, care of the Blacksmith's Blow Organ, to meet them, which he did, and they made him the following proposition:

"If you and your friends can raise five thousand dollars for Frank and I, we will withdraw that claim of nineteen dollars and fifty cents we brought

against you, then you will not be compelled to go through bankruptcy, as you have already settled with the rest of the creditors. If you do not do this, we will do everything in our power to injure you. We will go to the district attorney and tell him you have your books secreted in the City of New York and compel him to prosecute you."

"Why, you and the trustee have all the books and trunk, also the papers in the case; I haven't anything," said Abner, "and as far as you prosecuting me, I defy you or your colleagues. I am innocent of any crime, except the crime of being sick when health is needed, to defend myself against the ravenous wolves which beset me on every side. Again, I say, I defy you and all on earth. I have given my all and I will add to it, my lifeblood, if necessary, in defence of my honor and reputation, but not one cent to you, you dirty-nosed son of the Mohawk Valley, or to your blackhearted lawyer from the woolly west."

"Well, all right; we will meet you again at three p.m.

Abner now went to Joseph A. Murphy, his attorney, and told him what had happened.

"Swear out a warrant at once for the highway-men and blackmailers," said his lawyer, as his eyes snapped with righteous indignation.

"Yes, Joe, but I have no witnesses," said Abner, who was scarcely able to walk from the effects of

his long and serious illness and troubles, "and there are two of them, and Woolcraft is just as low as Frank, and you know how far down in the scale of honor and manhood he is who was willing to sell his brother, like Jacob's children sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver."

At three p.m. they all met at the referee's office, and "By." beckoned Abner to one side and renewed the proposition, backed up by further threats. Even if Abner was willing and base enough to do so, he couldn't meet their demands. Abner was then examined, the books were all in the trustee's hands—except what "By." had secreted in the trunk he had surreptitiously taken from Abner and had secreted in some storehouse. Now, the black-mailer's lawyer stood up and said he had a claim to present, and it was presented, and found not in proper form; consequently was rejected. It was again filed, but on investigation it was found to be again out of form and it was thrown out. This time it was sworn to by Louis Ruhe of the City of New York, and Abner found, on investigation, that the said Louis Ruhe had been dead eighteen years, consequently the statement and affidavit attached to the bill was forgery, backed up by perjury. This remarkable document certified to by a notary public, declared that the said Louis Ruhe personally appeared before a commissioner of deeds and swore to this infamous paper. No live man

would do it, so in their desperation they called on the dead. The object of putting in this bill was to compel Abner to go through the humiliation and expense of bankruptcy, and also to aid those who had his goods, cash or notes in their efforts to keep them. They tried in every way to embarrass Abner, who had already settled with all his creditors by turning over to them a hundred and ten thousand eight hundred dollars in cash and merchandise.

Its rejection and their humiliating defeat cut the comb of the blackmailers and they lay dormant for a while, intending at a future day, to renew their efforts and by fair means, foul or force, to compel Abner's friends to raise the blood money demanded. There is an old adage which says, "When thieves fall out, honest men get their dues." Soon the lawyer and his client were at loggerheads, and the true state of affairs was laid bare. The sunlight shining upon it soon revealed its rottenness, and honest men could see nothing in it but dead men's bones and all uncleanness. The lawyer was like the drunken man who called out "More rum," in his frenzy, but in this case, it was "more money, more money." Now this miscreant is like some people who think it is cheaper to move than pay rent. "By." hired another lawyer, and after awhile of course another move was necessary, and it came in due time. Then another and still another and still another. When Abner brought suit against him for alienation of his

wife's affection, blackmail, slander, criminal libel, defamation of character, etc., these suits were settled later on, through the good offices of an outsider who advised Abner that as Woolcraft was a worthless wretch, had nothing to lose but the remains of an ill-spent life, who in his infirmities, weakness, pain and deformity, was a walking monument of God's displeasure—a creature whom all, even his own blood, despised. It was only a waste of money to push them, for, said he:

“If you put Woolcraft in the penitentiary, the workhouse, almshouse or hospital, that is what his relations want, and I know you don't care to please them, do you? Leave him out and let them support the crawling wretch, then you will be getting square with them.”

So “By.” was allowed to go, on condition that his foul face and repulsive countenance never would again show itself under the same roof as Abner L'Estrange, who, with all his wounded soul said:

“Good-bye, ‘By.,’ and I hope it is forever. I never wish to see you again.”

CHAPTER III.

The snow was falling fast and the winds were blowing a terrific gale over the Mohawk Valley, as Nancy Woolcraft, her husband and their children were moving into the little village of Charleston, Montgomery County, New York.

"Rent this small farm and house until we get our bearings," said she to her husband.

"All right," said he.

"Now I wonder if the Mohawk Indians will annoy us?"

"Oh, no," said Nathaniel, "for I took along my baby-waker."

"Baby-waker" was an old English, yeoman flint gun, with a hammer like a cat's tongue, and when she did go off—which she sometimes did—she made things in front of her look sick. She threw a handful of number one shot in every direction, and sometimes did as much damage to those behind as she did in front. Nat called this her beautiful back-action, and he encouraged her in that direction, for he always put in an extra charge for others to fire off, so she would make an impression on them and plainly show her dislike for them. This was done to discourage the borrowing principle which was rapidly gaining ground in the village.

"My God, she nearly killed me," neighbors would say after they used her.

Nat, with a grin that would dry an Irish bog hole, replied: "Boys, she doesn't know you. I tell you my powder doesn't do well for anyone but me. You should buy your own ammunition, keep it in your room and you will get thoroughly acquainted."

But the stingy neighbors had skins as thick as a rhinoceros, and they were as deaf as an adder to these timely suggestions.

After a while Nat got married to Jane Overocker, who belonged to a close-fisted family of the valley. She was an exception to the rule or coat of arms of the family. "Keep all you have and grab all in sight" was emblazoned on their shield, but she was kind of heart, noble of soul and generous of hand; industry, patience, perseverance, coupled with honesty, intelligence, honor and integrity were stamped on every outline and feature of her face. Her neighbors loved and praised her, and the poor, when her demise came, mourned her as if all had lost a mother. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" History says yes; also shows that out of the vilest clay the gold and diamonds are taken, and out of the same mineral comes the copper and poisonous verdegriis. Her husband, Nathaniel Woolcraft, was an upright, industrious man, whose word was his bond. He was a farmer by birth and

education, careful, industrious and prudent. He died, leaving five children; three girls, Delilah, Maud and Emily, and two boys, Barney or "By.," and Monroe, or "Crum."

This family resembled the family of our first parents in the Garden of Eden—some were extremely good and some were like Cain—had the evil one pictured on their forehead. Now, this devoted and kind mother of five small children was, at an early age, compelled to face a fatherless home with a blanket mortgage on it. With a weak body and strong heart she faced her fate. She had no easy road to hoe. Her oldest girl happened with an accident when young which injured her for life, and her youngest son, Barney, was so lazy that she had almost to chew his food, and her oldest son was so unreliable that she could not trust him to pilot the horses with the milk to the factory for fear he would follow the aristocratic fashion of modern times—watering his stock, which he was caught at once, and she was made to subscribe three hundred dollars to the government to palliate his offence. A good strain was in her, however it came, but like the Irishman in jail, it was there and showed itself. Her sons caused her no end of trouble. They were accused of several crimes, and at last Uncle Sam claimed they washed stamps and used them. She died when young and left the children what she had made during her lifetime.

Maud, the younger, was a bright and talented girl and graduated from the normal college and went to school-teaching.

Emma died in the south from hardship and overwork in her brother's home. She was compelled to go out and chop ice after getting out of a bed of fever. Her brother, "Crum," concocted a will which gave him all she had, but it wasn't airtight and was broken. Maud, some years after, moved to a western city and went to live with Barney, or "By.," which they called him in fun, which means "instead of"—instead of a man. Later she married a limb of the law named John Weaklock, in the twin city of the Northwest. She, like her sister Delilah, was kindhearted to her blood relations, consequently she had to feed and clothe the good-for-nothing or dross of the family.

While all this was going on in Nathaniel Woolcraft's family, his nephew, George A. Woolcraft, his brother, and their sisters were living on the banks of the canal on whose riley waters some of them afterwards lived. Pete Montrose married one of the sisters; the other one was so thin she could not cast a shadow, consequently, was missed by the male sex. Pete, like his father—but not like his son—was fond of water, but after a while he found he could also live on land, and he engaged in the wholesale business, in which he was successful and ended with an honorable business record. Covered with honor in

a business life, and well thought of by his neighbors and church people, he departed for the shores of that country from whose bourne no traveler returns, leaving a name full of honor behind to his children, whom nature decreed would not change that name, for it gave them faces and dispositions which always made their defence strong enough against cupid's darts. Their faces were perfect Gibralters against the male sex; wealth beyond the rocks, but no man thought it worth while to scale them or could tolerate the visible in order to get the sweetness and comfort beyond. Therefore, they will die in their father's good name in peace, and when they do, R. I. P.

George A. Woolcraft married a shoemaker's daughter from the Dutch capital, named Schuler, or in English it is interpreted "Scarecrow." Her good-for-nothing brother robbed Abner out of seven hundred and eighty-six dollars of hard-earned cash. He, thinking she would be liberal enough, wrote asking her if she wouldn't pay this just and lawful debt of her brother's. Her answer was:

"I attend to my own business, you to yours and they to theirs."

This reply from one whom Abner heretofore looked on as scrupulously and religiously honest, shook his faith in her, and convinced him that her educating savages on the banks of the Tiber or in the jungles of India was nothing but vain glory and

hypocrisy, for is it not written, "If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen."

Abner posted this amount up to the wrong side of profit and loss, and opposite wrote the words "Appearances deceive," and balanced the account.

George A. Woolcraft took his brother Mortimer in business with him in order to give it a respectable appearance. Mortimer was one of God's noblemen, honest, kind-hearted, good-natured, honorable, dignified; a man of whom it could be said, "He was the noblest work of God—an honest man," and he took for his wife a queen of the West, a woman of rare learning, talents and refinement. Not since the days of the good Queen of Sweden was there a more intellectual, kind-hearted or noble woman than she. Her children and husband loved her for herself, not for what they got from her, and when she died all could say like Scancitius: "My mother is dead; my best, truest and most noble friend is taken from me." She left behind her, three daughters and three sons to mourn their loss. The brothers, as before stated, having formed a partnership, carried on the business for years and made quite a success of it. They made a good team for business—one, through his manly ways and open-hearted kindness attracted customers to him, consequently, made the money, and the other, who was like the cave, "open seize him," in the wilderness,

when he got it in his clutches, held on to it by fair means or foul like death does a coon. Their book-keeper, who had an honest mother, was grieved to see how Mortimer was plundered, but as his bread and butter depended on a shut mouth, he had to let the robbery go on. All Mortimer spent to get trade was charged up to him, and made his expenses one hundred times as large as G. A. Woolcraft's. G. A. W. never sold a bill of goods, nor could not, for the core of his heart was no larger than a sparrow's, and its shadow always repelled or disgusted the would-be buyer. Inventory day came after years of earnest and honest toil to Mortimer, to find he was charged with all he had spent in the interest of the firm.

"Mortimer," said his brother, "your personal expenses are too large. You must buy me out, or I will buy you out."

"I spent that money to sell goods, and why should it be charged to me?"

"Well, what I spent is also charged to me."

"Well, but you didn't sell any goods."

"What does the written agreement say?" said the sly old fox.

Mortimer had to submit to the agreement. No argument could save Abel from his brother's hand intent on blood; no persuasion could save Mortimer from his heartless and selfish brother's paw.

"Go you must; you say you have built up the

business; well, I'll let you see I can run it without you. I do not now need anybody; go, I say. Take inventory and when all your expenses are taken out of your share, you will get the balance, and you and I dissolve this partnership."

Mortimer, heart-broken and cast down, as well as cast out, with a paltry few dollars (while his partner had over a million), by his mother's base son, his elder brother, grieved almost to death, bid his numerous friends farewell and wandered into the cold, uninhabited West, there to end his own life of misery with his own hand. But the God of justice and mercy whose Omnicient eye watches over all things, and of whom it is said "a sparrow shall not fall to the ground," has long ago forgiven him for his rash deed, while he has visited the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation upon him who robbed him of his hard-earned livelihood, as you will see, dear reader, later on.

Mortimer had three daughters. The eldest had taken the place of mother to all her father's children and grandchildren. She spared not her own self, but sacrificed herself and hers for them all. How then can God deny his goodness to this woman who is indeed the purest and noblest of souls?

His second daughter has gone to join her father and mother in that blest land where thieves do not break through or steal, and left behind two noble children and their fond father to call her blessed.

May they shine forth as the sun in its strength and prove themselves worthy son and daughter of noble parents and grandparents.

The youngest daughter is a Daisy. She married a man of good character and habits and she makes a loving wife, mother and helper. The sons, some of them inherit some of the baseness of the other Woodcraft family, deserted their life-partners, but as in all animals, the bad strain will sometimes show itself and they would not all be liable to escape, for, like Barney, you must remember, they are related to the man on whose head rests the innocent blood of Mortimer Woolcraft, and on whose memory rests and will forever rest that bloody deed. Like the stain on Macbeth's hand, it will not wash off.

When the old wolf was told of his brother's death, like Cain, he answered as if pricked by his conscience, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

The daughter of the dead man answered: "No; but my father's blood crieth from the ground to heaven for vengeance, and you are the one on whom it will fall. Why do you insult his memory by offering me a home? If I had no home, I would prefer the lake or the canal to your den which is raised by the blood of infamy and fed and nourished on the heart's blood wrung from the widows and the orphans. Oh, no; keep your ill-gotten gains. God will provide for the fatherless and widow."

These words pierced like a Saracen's dagger into

the vitals of this modern Cain and caused him to cry out, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and like the leper Naaman of Syria, his uncleanness was becoming loathsome to him, and he now wished to be clean, and he and his cobweb-shrouded soul thought that the God of justice and mercy could be bought like a Jew pedlar, and he determined, if so, to be at peace with Him. So following the example of Naaman, he presented a sectarian university with thousands of dollars in hopes to wipe out his infamy and appease an angry God, but he will find out that not all the gold of India, or the diamonds of Africa, the jewels of Rome, or the waters of the ocean can make him presentable to an impartial judge. The widows and the orphans will rise up against him on the Judgment morn and say to him:

"You robbed me of my home; you cast me out in the cold; you in your subtlety, pretended you were a friend; advised me to buy a home, give you a lien upon it and when I had almost paid you for it, you discharged my husband out of your employ and forced the mortgage at a time when you knew I couldn't pay it."

The cry will sound in his ears, "Depart from me, I never knew you, you worker of iniquity."

His two daughters survive him, and they now live to see the hand of Omnipotent Jehovah wreak vengeance on them and on their children. They

now feel it. One of his children is not all there, and she also has a child with vacant lots, while two of them were tried for robbing the dead, and only escaped through the father's knowledge of law in hiring the district attorney to defend them; for which service they never paid him. The other daughter married a tailor's scullion and is now punished by the knowledge also of her own sin, and her first-born has to bear the curse of having her husband taken from her, while the second child mourns the loss of a fatherless baby, and her own debilitated condition brought on by a knowledge of her infamy and shame.

It looks as if they would have to drink the bitter cup to the dregs. Monroe Woolcraft and his sister bought from G. A. Woolcraft & Company all their old lasts and patterns and dies, paid them in part the hard-earned money of their parents. Thousands of dollars were taken for useless goods by this old graball, whose greed and perfidy knew no end. He robbed his brother and caused his death; next he robbed his cousin, C. B. Woolcraft, and last, Monroe Woolcraft and Delilah were mulcted by him. Like the old tyrant, he cried when no more were in sight to plunder.

"Crum" and Delilah formed a partnership under the firm name of Monroe Woolcraft & Company, and commenced to manufacture boots and shoes, but they could not succeed, for the goods they

bought from G. A. Woolcraft & Company were not alone like Monroe's milk-watered stock, but they had on them the curse of a brother's blood; so, like the Hebrew's spring well, which was nothing but a dirty pool, they dried up; but not before every city, town and hamlet in the United States had a victim, cursing their name and memory, and today the shoes they sent to their customers are on the shelves of the unfortunate dealers and will there remain, for they are unsalable at any price.

Delilah, seeing that they could not manufacture shoes, set her cap for a victim and she caught Abner L'Estrange. He cannot blame anybody but himself, for he was frequently warned against her, both by her brother "Crum" and her neighbors. One resident on E Street, wrote as follows:

"Dear Sir:—

"Having reason to know you are a respectable, highly educated, worthy citizen, I take this opportunity to warn you against Miss Woolcraft and her family. She is a most unreliable, unworthy and disagreeable young lady. Should you marry her, you will regret it as long as you live, for she will betray and desert you when you need her most. The family are all unscrupulous, unprincipled and unworthy; disagreeable in the extreme. They quarrel with their unfortunate sister-in-law all the time. May the God of the mother who watched over you save you from such a fate. Should you be fool

enough to take her, on your wedding day I extend my sympathy to you.

“AN E. STREET NEIGHBOR.”

“All spite,” said Abner to himself. “I don’t believe a word of it. ‘Crum’ is a fairly decent fellow and has treated me all right.”

While Abner’s brain was pondering over the letter, Monroe appeared on the scene.

“Have you any misses’ shoes, sizes from 1 to 2, at one dollar?”

“Plenty,” said “Crum,” “how many cases shall I send you?”

“Just seventy-two pair,” said Abner, “send them down to Pearl Street; send the bill over here.”

Abner paid the bill, and the next day found Monroe had sent seventy-two pair of small sizes and none of the sizes ordered. This coincided with the letter from the neighbor and set Abner thinking. Now, Abner was determined to find more out, to see how much of the letter was true, so he invited his prospective brother-in-law to take a trip with him West, and he did. Abner kept his eyes open all the time. He introduced “Crum” to his customers, and on Abner’s account and record for square dealing, they gave this unworthy successor of the most unworthy, large orders, and every one who did regretted it, for he sent all of them inferior goods.

It was on this trip Abner got into a misunderstanding with a Southern gentleman of semi-Spanish extraction on a political topic. Abner was getting the better of the argument against the suspender manufacturer from the Sunny South, when the Southern hot blood could stand Abner's sarcastic and cutting blows no longer. He stood back from Abner and let him have a right hand squarely on the face.

Blood flew from Abner's nose like a spicket, and he looked on in wonder, amazement and pain at the cheek and foolishness of this advocate of human slavery. He squared back again from Abner, who by this time commenced to get ready to defend himself. The Southern gentleman, with pugilistic tendency, was going through a lot of—what he thought—scientific manoeuvres to show his skill, thinking by this to intimidate Abner and save himself.

"One Southern man can lick five Northern men any day," he said to Abner, as he pranced around for an opening.

Abner was as still as if he was engaged in silent prayer, at the same time eyeing his opponent sharply, when the Southern gentleman, with a characteristic yell, rushed for him, saying:

"I'll teach you a lesson; you won't sneer at Jefferson Davis or the petticoats he donned, again."

As he advanced, Abner let go his left hand and

stopped his rush, while, with the right, he sent this bareboned individual against a mirror twenty feet away.

As he fell, Abner rushed up to him and seeing him wiggle and call out, "Let me alone; don't hit me again."

"I will not," said Abner, "strike you while you're down, but should you get on your feet again before you make a thorough apology to me, I will send you through that wall on the double quick. If one Southerner can beat five Northerners, I can lick in one hundred seconds one hundred such as you, and don't you deny it, for if you do, I'll knock you down and kick you for falling."

The Southerner now commenced to realize that Abner was his superior physically, as well as mentally, and soon he was as meek as the proverbial Moses.

The owner of the store now came on the scene and with outstretched hands thanked Abner for punishing the insulting merchant who, only a few minutes before, had insulted Mr. Chamberlain, the proprietor, in a political argument.

"Crum" looked on with the expression on his face of one who was thinking out a problem. It was, "I better be careful what I do, or I may some day follow that fellow's example and, like him, be compelled for my indiscretion to practice rapid transit."

Their mission ended in that town, so they took the train for the next, where Abner found his experience had been wafted ahead of him and all looked in wonder at the man with a face like the peaceful governor who made such short work of the would-be pugilist in Geneva, Ohio.

"You look scared," "Crum" would say to Abner, who had long ago dismissed the incident from his mind.

Soon, Monroe's time came and he had to do and act the coward's part. He and Abner called at a store, where "Crum" found some of his goods that were never paid for. When he began to take the unpaid for shoes off the shelves, the owner called to him to stop, and Monroe replied, "I will not."

"If you do not, I will go there and make you stop."

Puffed up with the thought of having a man at his back, "Crum" said he didn't meet many men who could make him stop.

"Well," said the bald-headed little son of Jacob, "I can do it. Now, there is a man who is a gentleman; he came in with you, and I'll let him be judge between us, and if I cannot lick you, I will let you take all my store."

By this time the son of Israel was stripped for action and moving at Monroe with a springy step, soon convinced "Crum" that discretion was the

better part of valor, and he realized that he must run at once if he wished to save himself. And run he did, out of the door like a jack rabbit around a rock on the mountains of California, convincing Abner that he was a full brother of Barney, whom he had seen run away from his lady companion when he saw a dog approaching them, he ignominiously leaving her to her fate. She, having good blood in her, faced her foe with determination and came off victor, while her cowardly companion watched like an old crow from the fence top at the encounter. When the excitement was over she said to Abner, "Had you or my brother been with me, I would not have been left alone as I was. I do not want his companionship in future, for he is neither man nor monkey, and I am glad he is no relation of mine."

"Come, let us take inventory," said Monroe to his bookkeeper. "This is the first day of January, or I should say, the second, and John Piebald will be around from Bradstreet's to see how much we made last season. Now, Delilah, we must have a good showing, for I have worked hard and you should let me have good figures. It's encouraging to be rich—even if it is only on paper."

"Monroe, look here; George L. Steadyman, our predecessor's senior son-in-law from the rural district, has only charged us ninety-nine dollars and ninety-eight cents for collecting that one hundred

dollar bill we gave him against H. Fulder, on Pearl Street. Now, that shows you, brother 'Crum' that what they say of him is not so. Old Colonel Haskins was so base as to say that George L. S. never gave up anything to anybody; that he always made his bill and expenses balance, if not overrun, the amount collected."

"I am glad," said Monroe, "to see he is improving."

"Well, you see they are all pleased with us, because we paid the old man such a fine price for his obsolete lasts and patterns, and then we also paid him, you know, for quite a number of cockroaches and water bugs, which I really think belonged to Yerks, the fruit man down stairs."

"Never mind; I'll get square with him. I will turn over to him some of those notes that have been troubled with appendicitis of the commission hay man at Fonda in payment, and let him collect them if he can. Bookkeeper, do you know I am a bright fellow and destined to be among the richest men of my day?"

The bookkeeper, who was connected by blood as well as business ties, did not see it in that light, and she said, "I have my doubts about that."

"Oh, you're always jealous, because I think more of my wife than I do of you. Well," he continued, "she is superior to you, for her brother is a minister and your brother is only a fool, or as

we call it, 'half-knave and half-fool,' known to educated people, like my wife's folks, as an hybridous."

"Now 'Crum,' anyone would believe that, who knows you as I do, and if you wish still further proof of your stupidity, look at how you have spelled factory on that sign. You have spelled it 'factroy.'"

"Oh, you're always finding fault with everything I do. I cannot run my own business as I wish to. The Steering foreman and you have almost ruined me by your persistent interference. I tell you both that from this day out I will be boss, and you both will obey me. I will now print a sign and put it up right here in front of the office:

"RULES.—This factory will be open buzzness every day in the year; Monroe Woolcraft will supply all the brains and money to ruin it. No interconference from without or within. No union limping relegates or other disturbers will be brooked. Monroe Woolcraft & Company, shoe manufacturers of the G. A. W. grade specialties. N. B. We put them up in dressing-case cartoons suitable for a lady's chamber. We manufacture our own leather in our own factories and always have such large quantities on hand that our goods run more uniform than those of our less fortunate neighbors who have not the means to buy more than a few skins at a time. We use nothing but

the best of wool sheepskin in our goatskin leather. We defy all competitors. Our goods are carried in stock by most disreputable dealers, or whoever bought a pair of shoes from us."

"Printer, when can you have one thousand of those struck off for me?"

Prouty, the printer of variegated colors, closed one eye and nearly the other and looking his patron saint squarely in the face, said with some sarcasm:

"Hand that in to your bookkeeper first and have her write it over, correcting the spelling, or the printers might set it up as it is, and everyone would ask what colossal ass got that up; and as I like to put my name on all my work, I would not care to be looked on as the father of that monstrosity."

Monroe got excited and tore up the manuscript and walked into his sanctum with the strut of a czar, the brains of a pigeon and the heart of a magpie to see what next was to be done.

"Look here, Monroe, here's a bill for dry goods from Meyers; it must be paid."

"Well, pay it."

"Where did the goods go to, Monroe?"

"If there're not at home," said "Crum," "Providence must have taken them. Pay it anyway, it will brace up our credit."

Next came a squeaky voice as if from the tomb, saying:

"Where can I find stock to cut that G grade out of?"

"We haven't any."

"Where can I get stock for the A grade?"

"We have none."

"For the W grade?"

"Got none," said the bookkeeper, who was now writing a note to her sister to come and draw out her money, for the rats were leaving the building, which is a sure sign the ship is going to sink.

The sister, with a smile upon her face, came into the office and requested of "Crum" her cash and he answered:

"I can't supply you with money all the time; go work for it."

"I do not want your money," said his sister, "I only want my own that I intrusted you with."

The bookkeeper, who had the power of attorney, had already given her a check and drawn the money on it. The sister, knowing that, smiled at Monroe.

This is where Delilah learned to grab on to any cash entrusted to her keeping. In this, she was a full sister to her brother and former partner, and a worthy successor to the infamous, dishonest, selfish, unprincipled, miserable, stingy, base, heartless G. A. W.

Monroe, hearing the bookkeeper answer the foreman, said:

"Well, I'll put up another notice: Bulletin No.

Two—Employees will please take notice that a cut of fifty per cent on all wages will be made tomorrow.”

“This,” he said to himself, “will cause a strike and it will last until I get some money to buy another half-dozen skins.”

“Bookkeeper,” he said in imperious tones, “write out a squib for the paper on these lines: ‘Workingmen strike against reduction of wages at Woolcraft & Company’s factory. Thousands of large orders on hand and mountains of stock to make them from, but men will not work at reasonable or fair wages. Mr. Woolcraft, the senior member and brains of the firm, when seen by a reporter, was busily endorsing checks before making his deposit in the bank, but his gentlemanly spirit soon turned him to the newspaper reporter and he gave a true history of the strike: My men belong to the unions, and they, knowing I had a number of large orders to get out at once, and also seeing a very large stock of goods to make them from on hand, were contemptible enough to think it was a good time to strike, but my firm will spend a million, if necessary, to crush out this foreign and un-American unionism. We Americans,” and he swelled up to five feet high, “will not be ruled by Irishmen; they cannot run us. This is a free country.”

The strike went on for months. The salesman

who was the remains of an ill-spent life of three score years and ten, was drunk in a small town on the New York Central Railroad; the truckman was suffering from lumbago at his home; the baby was sleeping behind a clay mound up in the frozen North; the water bugs and rats were fast leaving the building; they couldn't stand the cold; the bookkeeper was suffering from hay fever in the depth of winter and the proprietors were scouring the country for a greenhorn to sell out to.

This second notice had the same effect as the handwriting on the wall in the time of Belshazzar; destruction, desolation and ruin had come at last and the inevitable sign of decay was put on the door: "To let, inquire of the baby." The dragon and its young were no more, and many there were who wished *bon voyage* to both and prayed that they might never return.

It was at this time that Delilah, now like Blaine, cast an anchor to windward. No more business, so next best thing was to marry for business—not sentiment. At this opportune moment a handsome, well educated, innocent youth came along and fate at once had him in its meshes. He fell madly in love with her. Like Sampson of old, his eyes were put out and she made him grind in her prison house. His love was not reciprocated; she played with his affections like a cat worries its victim, until she commenced to see he was growing shy under

her treatment; then she raised the headgates of her hypocritical devotion and poured love upon him, such as it was, in gigantic volume. He, poor fool, took this artificial, frothy affection for the genuine article, and succumbed to her wiles in the month of roses, when the marriage ceremony was performed by the author of double bow knots by one who ties them.

Now, the marriage ceremony being over, Barney's unhallowed whispers soon changed the fountains of make-believe love to rivers of eternal hate, which generated diabolical deeds and treacherous as well as selfish acts—never before equalled since the days of Mary Queen of Scots, and the infamous, deceitful, undermining Bothwell murdered Darnley. Awful to relate; yes, indeed, awful; and the hand that now pens it shudders at the thought of the traps, snares and murderous pitfalls laid for this confiding, devoted, unsuspecting youth, who, many a time afterwards, repeated the old adage in tears, "Married in haste, repent at leisure;" for, just as the ostrich is coaxed and decoyed into the deadly pen to be plucked, so did she entice this honest specimen of manhood into her snare, and not alone did she pluck off all his valuable plumage, but in his weakness and ill-health tried to confine him in an institution where she knew his death would be hastened by the thought of her base, unprincipled, mercenary conduct

towards him. What cared this modern Catherine of Russia whether he languished in a cell or not, so long as she and her brother "By" could enjoy the fruits of his hard, painstaking labor? "Man proposes, but God disposes." The Omniscient eye of the Father, of whom it is written, "Never allows the righteous to be forsaken, or his seed begging bread," decreed it otherwise. The still, small voice reached the core of this woman's calloused heart and said to her, like Paul of old, "Halt." The scales now fell from her eyes, and like the prodigal son, she saw herself in her true light. She sees her duty and resolves to do it. "I will arise and go to my husband and say unto him, 'I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight. I am no more worthy to be called by the sacred name of wife; make me, I pray thee, as one of thy hired servants, for I have robbed you; I have deserted you in sickness and disease; I have not obeyed the laws of God in that I have cared for my brother and neglected you. I have acted like the ungrateful skylark, which sings its sweetest songs to the clouds, while it gets its food and bed upon the earth. You have been good to me; you have never denied me anything; your purse-strings were always open to my wants and your heart to my affections. I, therefore, should not have caused you trouble in your adversity, pain in your sickness, deserted you in your loneliness. Instead of being

a help to you, I aided your enemies. In your weakness, I placed pitfalls before you; I persecuted you even unto death; I lied about you. My base brother filled my heart with hate against you, in order that I might feed and clothe him at your expense. My unnatural brother may desert his wife and leave her to freeze in the cold and frozen Northwest, but, God helping me, I will not shirk my duty again. Only forgive me this once. I know I am not worthy of one leaf of your affection; your true and constant love as exemplified in your unswerving conduct to me. Let me love you, I beseech of thee, so that I may, by my future acts, show that all good is not gone out of me. Give me a chance to make reparation for my sins and I promise you I will stand by you against the world in future. Your friends shall be my friends, your people shall be my people, and your God my God. I will turn the back of my hand as well as my life to all that is unrighteous, unclean and unholy, and sanctify myself to thee and my God forever.'"

Like the father in the parable, Abner met her while she was yet a good way off and with open arms and revived affection, welcomed the penitent home. His old love all came back again and they were happy once more.

In the exuberance of her joy she continued: "I now see this wanton, selfish brother in his true light and as you now forgive me, I will, in future, be

your wife in deed as well as in name. I am truly sorry," she said, with sobs, "I made you so much trouble and expense, but I couldn't help it. He paralyzed my sensorium, my judgment he took from me, through his wily serpentine words I could see nothing good in you," she continued. "I lickerished his words; I acted on his diabolical suggestions; I obeyed his unnatural orders; I satisfied his inhuman desires; I forgot the divine command, 'Therefore shall a person leave his father, brother, sister and all and cleave unto their wife or husband.' He is not to blame, though, for the poor little wretch realizes his inability to earn a livelihood, and like the cruel Italian scoundrel in the play, he kept me in his power so as to get out of me his daily bread. I see it all now; I see it," she said, with sobs which plainly told of a contrite heart.

Scarce had this outburst of repentance died away and before a dozen morning suns had risen on their joy, the despoiler of homes again put in his appearance and in Abner's absence, whispered in her ear:

"Leave him; come with me. I will treat you more kindly when you are sick than he will. He will remember your treatment of him and treat you cruelly. You know I am your mother's son; your dear brother 'By'," and she listened to the serpent charmer's deceitful words, and again Abner was left alone to commune with himself.

After she was gone Abner pondered over what had happened during the few days of his happiness and he felt discouraged and resolved to go to the land of gold and shining sun; leave cruel fate behind him, if possible, and commence life anew, calling to mind the lines of the poet :

If the friend who embraced in prosperity's glow,
With a smile for each joy and a tear for each woe,
Should betray thee when sorrows like clouds are
arrayed,
"Look aloft" to the friendship which never shall
fade.

Should the visions which hope spreads in light to
thine eye,
Like the tints of the rainbow, but brighten to fly,
Then turn, and through tears of repentent regret,
"Look aloft" to the Sun that is never to set.

—LAWRENCE.

Acting on the thought, he bought a ticket over the Pennsylvania railroad for the far West. It was now six P. M. and the male chambermaid of his stateroom came along with a smile that resembled the door of a chicken coop and said :

"Do you wish your bed made up?"

Abner, who now felt like the boy pictured in the school book who caught his bird but let it out of his hand again, said, "Yes." Soon Abner was in bed and fast asleep, for he had now made up his mind all

was over between them. He would not think, in future, any more of his fickle and unreliable wife, and resolved to leave her and all her relatives behind, blot her name out of the book of his remembrance, cut her off from him as soon as the law of the Golden State would allow.

As he drew near the blackened, smoky city of Pittsburg, "Breakfast now ready in the dining car," said the man with the apron put on to protect his Sunday pants.

"I'll take breakfast now," said Abner, "for I am hungry. I haven't had anything since I left New York yesterday."

"Good breakfast."

"Good money," said Abner, as he handed the conductor a cartwheel in exchange for the morning meal.

Breakfast over, Abner sat beside the window and watched the fields and woodlands as he flew through them at the rate of sixty miles an hour. Cattle, windmills, fields and oil wells passed from his view at lightning speed, and at eight p. m. he was nearing Chicago, where he put up for the night at the Grand Pacific Hotel. In the morning he called on his cousin and her four beautiful children, where he received a warm welcome such as only true-hearted people can give.

"Glad to see you. How gray and worn you look," said his cousin, with a smile. "I am glad

your troubles are over ; you have had an awful time of it, haven't you ? ”

“ Yes,” said Abner, “ I had a hot time for the last two years. Treachery has placed all those gray hairs in my head. I am now determined to live down all my sorrows, disappointments and losses, and with an eye only set on the future, my back turned on the past, I will leave Chicago tonight.”

That night Abner boarded the train for Canada. He reached Manitoba's chief city, Winnipeg, two days later, in good health and excellent spirits. Winnipeg is a beautiful city of the Northwest, surrounded by the best wheat country in the world. The small lakes in the country surrounding Winnipeg abound in fish. The city is built at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers ; it commands the trade of the North, East and West. It is different from most Western and Northern cities in that its houses are mostly substantial structures of brick and stone ; electric lights, parks, immense flouring mills, half a dozen grain elevators and one of the largest abbatoirs in the world, are the principal things that catch the eye of the tourist.

Abner stayed here two days, saw all the sights, and were it not for Jack Frost, who seemed to be in full possession of the place, he would have stayed longer. This is a cold country. Seven months of the year it is bound in ice and snow.

Next stop was at Marquette, where Abner got out his gun and shot some game. The town is just half way between Vancouver and Montreal. His next stop was at Rush Lake, a place noted for its great flocks of game of almost all kinds, where swans, geese, ducks and pelican can be found in myriads; also large game.

Abner got out here and remained a week, shooting wild duck of all kinds, from the teal to the mallard—no waiting or walking—just take aim. The climate is exceedingly mild here, considering the latitude, and so dry that a person rarely feels the cold.

The next stop was at Calgary, altitude three thousand four hundred feet; population, between six and seven thousand. This is a snug little city; it is indeed, the most healthy-looking, prosperous and inviting on the road. It is known as the sirloin of Canada. It is situated on a hill-girt plain, shaded by the Rocky Mountains, and is the furnisher of supplies to the great ranching country which lies north of it.

He stopped over a week to see the sights, and was indeed surprised to see the tremendous herds of cattle which were fed on the plains, winter and summer. Calgary has a very mild climate and as coal is exceedingly cheap and lumber plenty, little or no hardship is felt from cold by its inhabitants.

Next place of note he stopped at was Banff. This is known as the Switzerland of the Western hemisphere. Now, Abner had forgotten the past and all its troubles, trials, blue streaks and misfortunes, and was now just commencing to enjoy nature's grandest effort which here loomed up before him in majestic splendor, as he walked through the Canadian National Park which lies in the heart of the Rocky Mountain range. This Garden of Eden, with its rivers, valleys and forest-clad slopes, its shining cascades and the roaring, foaming torrents of the Bow River, create a picture as charming as any on earth. Abner thought to himself, "What pen or brush can paint its equal; it beats the old masters' efforts and puts the work of the most clarified pen in the shade," and he exclaims, "Behold, greater than Raphael is here; great is nature's handiwork and sublime are these, her greatest and most beautiful productions."

This is the head and shoulders of the giant Rocky Mountain range. The Park is a national reservation, nearly twenty-six miles long and almost eleven wide. It embraces the valleys of the Bow-spray and Cascade Rivers, Devil's Lake and three or four mountain ranges. No part of these giant hills show man more sublime or pleasing scenery than this point. Devil's Lake has the largest trout

in the world, and Abner hired a rod and reel to catch some. Now he had the rod and tackle, but soon was like a young doctor—out of patience (patients). He could not wait for the trout to make up his mind to swallow the hook, so he trolled for him and soon he had a giant struggling on his hook. No sooner had this finny inhabitant of the water been struck so unceremoniously and in so unsportsmanlike manner, then he shot with almost lightning speed for the opposite side of the lake, while Abner held his breath. He let him have all the line he wanted and soon his stock on hand grew small and he feared he was going to lose him, also his line, when suddenly the fish stopped and the line lay in the water without strain.

Abner now was in high glee, and calling to the guide, said, "I have got him, sure pop."

But he counted without his host, for no sooner had he said this, than the reel commenced to spin off again. Abner now knew that it would not be long until all the line was out and then it would be a case of strength, as the robin said when he pulled the worm out of the ground.

"Play him," said the guide, "or he will snap the line."

Abner was green at the business, and the fish was very large and as full of game as an Irish terrier. He tugged and pulled at the line, then slacked up a little, when Abner commenced to wind

him up. His feet sank in the mud, so he determined to get upon a rock and haul the fish to shore, or pull his hook out of him and try for a smaller one. No sooner had Abner stepped on the rock than he lost his balance and the fish gave another pull and Abner slipped into ten feet of good, clean water.

"Are you a Baptist?" called out the guide.

"No, I am not," said Abner, "but I have a cousin Margaret that is foolish enough to want plenty of water."

"Let go the rod," roared out the guide.

"Not if the Old Boy after whom the lake is called was on the end of it, I won't," said Abner, who was swimming around with one hand, while the other had a death-grip on the rod.

After a few minutes Abner got back to the rock, water streaming off him and his teeth rattling. He at once set to haul in by sheer force, the unruly fish.

"You will break the line."

"I will not," said he, "but I'll pull him in, or I will pull his teeth out."

He tugged and wound up the line. At last the fish lay motionless in the water and allowed himself to be hauled near the shore. Now, he was within a few feet of the rocks, and Abner could see he had an enormous large trout on the line, and the hook and bait were fastened to the west end of the fish going east.

Abner acted as if he was afraid to speak, for fear of scaring the fish, so he kept pulling on the line until he got him almost ashore, when the fish made one more desperate effort to free itself. Abner's temper now was growing a little warm, and with teeth set, he gave one long, strong pull and the fish was on the sand, where the hook pulled out of him. Abner, seeing his prey about to escape, threw himself, like a gladiator, upon his victim, and as he grabbed at it, the fish with a sudden jerk hit Abner on the face with his tail, inflicting a stroke of punishment upon his enemy before he died.

Abner now carried the trout to the hotel, where he boasted of his swimming and fishing qualities.

The guide called again that afternoon, but Abner had enough of the finny tribe for one day and also for the next and maybe for life, for he not alone caught the trout, but also a heavy cold.

"I do not like fishing," said he, "but if you furnish me a guide, I'll go after some game with my gun."

The next morning found Abner and six of his fellow-tourists climbing the mountains, and he was no amateur at it, nor at the art of calling down game with his gun. When they started from the hotel, all told of their experience with a shotgun. Abner kept still, expecting to surprise them when the time came for action. They had not long to wait when they could try their skill, for rabbits

and small game were in abundance, quail flew and rabbits ran everywhere, only to be fired at and missed.

"Stop," said he, "let me take the next half-dozen shots," and they did, when he potted the six.

Soon he had the attendant loaded with game, his experience on the mountains of California having almost made him a perfect shot. No animal could run fast enough to get away from him, and nine birds out of ten that he fired at would meet their fate. Even the jack rabbit on the Southern mountains and plains could not escape him, and I have seen him shoot four out of a covey of quail with a repeater before they got beyond reach of his deadly aim.

When the party started for home at six P. M. he had more game than the other five, and each of them fired more shots than he. They all agreed that Abner was the best shot on the Rockies, flying or running; also a good swimmer, but he had neither the skill nor patience of a good fisherman.

Next day, all started out again, and like the day before, Abner got the most game. He would wait until the game was first fired at and missed before he pulled on them, and then down they came. His skill with the gun and his ignorance, awkwardness and impatience with the rod, was the gossip of the boys at the hotel. His tongue sometimes was as polished as if he had kissed the Blarney stone all

his life, and then again, it was as rough as a cat's and cut like a two-edged sword, often too deep to heal.

Abner enjoyed life here and was grieved to leave.

"I wish I were rich," he said, "and I would live on the Rocky Mountains with the wild goats and mountain sheep, with heaven's starry blue sky for my roof; the rockies for my hobstone and the plains for my floor and vegetable garden, the Fraser River for my salmon and water supply, and the Devil's Lake for my ice box; the boiling springs at Banff for my hot water tank, and I think, then, heaven would be my future home. Alas, my dream is over, and I must leave in the morning for Vancouver, there to take the Pacific line of steamers for San Francisco. "Call me at five A. M.," said Abner to the clerk at the Hot Springs Hotel. "I wish to leave for Vancouver in the morning on the 5:50 train."

"All right," said the genial quill driver, "I'll do so," and added, "sorry to learn you are going to leave us; haven't we treated you all right?"

"Yes," said Abner, with emphasis. "There is not one man on the line of the Canadian Pacific that knows how or could treat anyone but squarely and gentlemanly; no road on earth handled by a finer set of men than the same C. P. R. It is a pleasure to travel from the Atlantic to the Pacific

and be sure of courteous and gentlemanly treatment all the time. The smallest child or feeblest old lady can travel by this road with perfect safety."

"Well, Mr. L'Estrange, good bye," said the ink-slinger. "I will not be able to see you in the morning."

"Good bye," said Abner, "and I hope to see you some day again, and should you ever call at Los Angeles, come and see me. My door always swings in for friends."

Abner now went to bed thinking of all the joy he had at Banff and soon he was fast asleep. He dreamed of the name of the lake and it soon disturbed his slumbers and in the darkness he thought he could see Barney's face in agony and despair as he swam around the lake calling for help. The master of ceremonies of the place, with a smile on which he has a patent, answered, "Ah there, stay there. I was cast out of Heaven for disobedience, but you will never see it, for you were born in iniquity, conceived in sin and now my home will be yours for all eternity. You breaker of hearts and wrecker of homes, you degrader of the orphan and despoiler of the widow, you ensnarer of the innocent, maligner of the just, robber of the sick and fever-stricken, enemy of all that is righteous, noble, elevating, just and holy, you have divided your last home, you have decoyed and deceived your last victim. After you are washed and clean

I will have you transferred to that place where you see the smoke, there to remain until time is no more, where the worm never dies and the fire is not quenched; where there is and forever will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. You have earned this your reward and I'll see that you get it. When you are clean enough, you will be transferred—not till then. You are now too foul and dirty to associate with."

There on the banks stood all those whom he had injured in his lifetime, pointing their fingers with scorn at him, and saying to him:

"I told you you would get here; my unborn babe curses you; my fevered brain prayed for your downfall; my deceived and ruined daughter asked for this punishment for you, my broken-hearted husband, whom you decoyed to the wooly West and robbed of the savings of a lifetime, with asthmatic voice supplicated the throne of grace to punish you. My dear daughter whom you married, neglected, covered with infamy and shame, asked with tears, that you be sent here, and now that you are here, you will get your deserts, I hope. I have no ambition for your company, but I suppose you know I have no choice, so I am determined to make the best of it."

"Turn on the steam," said someone in the building.

Abner thought they were going to scald "By "

and he awoke to find that it was five o'clock and the bells were ringing. The perspiration freely flowed off him; he raised himself on his elbow and looked around the room to see if he could find Barney or his ghost. Not seeing them he concluded 'twas a dream. So he dressed himself and got to the 'bus and soon was on board the train and fast leaving Banff toward the setting sun.

Next place of interest is Hector. At this place a crystal water separates into the great divide, one arm flowing to the Pacific, the other into Hudson Bay. The spinal column of the continent is here. The station at the foot of the Rocky Mountains is named after the first President of the railroad. Perched here and there on the mountain sides like wicker baskets on the Irishman's donkey, are small, beautiful lakes, hidden from the casual observer's view by romantic environments. Their loveliness and charm surpasses description. There is a path to Mirror Lake higher up in the mountains, where there is a comfortable, as well as beautiful hotel. Still further up in cloudland, is the crystal lake, Agnes, from which a beautiful view of the valley and adjacent mountains can be taken. The path also leads to Paradise Valley, Valley of the Ten Peaks, and other spots of interest to the tourist.

"Now I am in the clouds, my next thought is how to go down without rolling. Well, I got

down and am tired enough to sit still on the train to Vancouver."

We are off again over the valley of the Fraser River, on which are the richest salmon fisheries of the world; on and on we rush. At last we enter the canyon of the Thomson River. Here the coeval mountains draw nigh to one another, and our train runs along their faces hundreds of feet above the struggling river. The waters now are more confined and deeper, and the scenery changes to savage grandeur. The threatening cliffs tower above our heads and remind us of Joseph's coat of many colors. Now and then can be seen, through breaks in the clouds, the snowy peaks of the Rockies as they nestle amidst the planets in the blue heavens above us. We are now running at a fast pace and soon Burrow Inlet is in view. From here we can look back at the snow-capped mountains and wonder how we ever got through. Soon Vancouver is reached and it is a pleasant surprise to see such a beautiful city after passing through the wild homes of the tiger, lion, the moose, the bear, the cayote and mountain sheep. Vancouver has beautiful homes, schools and churches; its streets are clean and paved with asphalt. It is lighted by gas and electricity; it has an ample supply of pure water from the mountains; it's harbor has steamship lines for the Orient, as well as all along the

Pacific Coast, Australia, Van Dieman's Land and Puget Sound.

Abner got off the train and soon was on his way to the Vancouver Hotel, where he stayed all night and received the kindest of treatment. In the morning he made his way to the steamer for San Francisco. Getting on board before many of the passengers were astir, he walked up and down watching the crafts as they passed in and out the harbor. He now determined to keep a diary of each day, so he opened his first day:

"Got on board all right; breakfast none, lost it between the boat and the hotel; lunch at twelve o'clock, dinner at six P. M.; felt badly, caused by the rocking of the vessel; took some pills, went to bed and slept soundly. Second day out: Got up at five A. M., met a United States warship and several other vessels; was amused to see the sea gulls fly after the vessels and fight for the food which the sailors threw out. Breakfast at eight; lunch at twelve and dinner at six was all of interest that day. Went early to bed; didn't feel good. Third day, got up early, passed an iceberg, watched the seals, or sealions, flounder in the water, ate my meals with a relish; now San Francisco was in view and all aboard were glad. We were soon on the dock and moving up the plank; all scattered to their various homes."

Abner put up at the Grand Hotel for the night,

intending to pay a visit to Golden Gate Park in the morning. Morning came and he wended his way to the park, which is, in his humble judgment, the finest in the world. Once there he visited his favorite spot first—the large avaries. These colossal cages embrace an earthly paradise of rocks and rills, valleys and forest-clad hills, slopes covered with trees and shrubs of almost endless variety, while down its valleys, flow rushing torrents of crystal water from the mountains, bestowing a blessing on all animal and vegetable life as it passes through on its way to the restless ocean. Within these glass and wire palaces, can be seen the most beautiful of nature. The trees are filled with birds of every clime, and their songs enliven the leisure hours of the visitor with music that hath no comparison as they fly from bough to bough or quench their thirst in the silvery waters of the rushing brook. Above all can be heard the wild, heaven-inspiring notes of the master songster of the Orient—the Pekin nightingale, as it flits, with indescribable speed from bough to grass and grass to water's edge, its yellow-decked wings shining like golden spots in the sun, and all agree that it is the most beautiful as well as the loveliest songster of the glade. Next you see perched on a tree overhanging the running waters, a number of German and Egyptian nightingales. With open beaks these children of the queen of song add their unexcelled

musical efforts to the praises of nature. What this bird lacks in beauty, it makes up in the richness of its voice, and is well seconded in its efforts by a number of skylarks from the bogs of the Isle of St. Patrick. The Irish song thrush from the green fields and mountains can also be seen and heard in numbers, as well as the golden bill blackbird from its native haunts in the white thorn hedges of the Green Isle. Hundreds of St. Andresbergh canaries of all hues and colors, from the mountains of the fatherland and the forests of Thuringa join in the chorus. Cooing doves, climbing and ground squirrels, African gray parrots and Mexican double yellow heads are also here. California quail, prairie chicken, cotton-tail and partridge run among the trees; the Kentucky cardinal and Baltimore oriole sing while sitting on the tops of the little bird cottages swinging from the trees. The former has a coat of red like an English soldier, while the latter is dressed in the colors of Lord Baltimore. The sublime songster, the inimitable mockingbird from the sunny South, dwell with the wild ducks and geese from the frozen fields of Canada and Alaska. The little robin redbreast and the king of all birds, the wren from the British Isles, chum with the countless varieties of African finches from the land of the savage Zulus; the Java sparrow disputes the ground in deadly combat with their English cousin. The beautiful bulfinch from Germany boss their

cousins from the English orchards. The magpie and crow are domiciled with the peacock on account of their dishonesty. The African lovebirds caress one another in the shade of some rubber plant. The golden pheasant with his beautiful plumage, basks in the sunshine under the willow; the wild turkey struts like Roscoe Conklin in the Senate of old, on the gravel pathway, and the most conceited bird of all and the most beautiful—the Irish goldfinch—sings to its little mate on its wooly nest, while the humming birds fly around and sip nectar from the flowers that cluster on the walls. The most casual observer is convinced at once that this bird village is cosmopolitan, for all kingdoms and countries are represented, from the flowery kingdom of the chrysanthemum to the opposite side of the earth and around to the palace of the Mikado, are gathered the best specimens of their kind, for their emigration laws are very strict—none but the educated and well-bred being allowed to enter. There is not a song bird on the earth's surface that Abner knows or even heard of, but can be found here, also the rare and beautiful birds from the warmer climates.

Abner walked along between these castles full of verdure, life and song, and his heart was cheered as he passed out into the open park. It was now six p. m. and he headed for home between houses and trees covered with fruit and flowers, and lingered

as he bent his ears to catch the cadence of the song as it died in the distance. At last he got to Golden Gate Park and from there to the cars, back to the hotel. What he heard and saw that day filled his soul full of praise of the people of the Golden State and in his extreme delight, said:

"This is, indeed, California the Golden, the Queen State of the West, and is rightly and justly entitled to the Golden Gate."

No stronger or more convincing proof of the refined and cultured man is found anywhere. The beauties of nature, resplendant under the rays of a golden sun, mingled with the sweet music of the winged songsters of the forest and the pleasant odor from trees, shrubs and flowers, make one think this is an earthly paradise—a fairyland. But some primitive debauched specimens of mankind were also there and as they walked along, their actions and words indicated they did not see anything of interest. They remarked, "We don't see anything here but birds, animals, plants, flowers, walks, trees, gates and poor workingmen," and wished they had gone to the Troy House instead, where they could put sawdust for an overcoat on their tobacco juice, and hear some red-eyed specimen of animated clay strangle music on an instrument once called a piano. The beautiful had no charms for them, the refined works of nature and higher man were dust in their eyes. The sinner would not

enjoy Heaven, it is said, or its beauties, but prefers the dark region, the companionship of the cloven foot, the lewd and the debauched; so they preferred the odor of decayed grain, putrid cheese, and the rasping, squeaky voice of the scarlet woman, to the heaven-inspiring notes of the nightingale, the pure, invigorating air of the mountains and sweet incense of the plants and flowers.

Abner enjoyed Golden Gate Park and some day will pay it another visit. All are welcome—even if all do not appreciate or enjoy it, and with true, liberal, open-hearted Western hospitality, without money, without price, you can walk through from one end to the other and no one will frown upon you. The trees and the plants, as well as the parrots, sing out, "Welcome;" Polly adds, "Glad to see you, stranger; come in and see us."

Abner's experience with the pets in the park created in him a desire to see his own, and on the following day he called at Mrs. Martin's, who kept them for him, to see them. When Abner left Oakland for the East he left them in her care until he returned. Now he was back again and ready to take them home. All were well except the African gray parrot, Dandy. He died a few months ago, of grief after mother, as he always called Delilah. Dandy was looked on, and he was the most intelligent of birds; he could carry on a conversation with a person as intelligently as the average citizen.

He could spell words of three syllables, add three lines of figures, knew simple multiplication, and could easily tell a doctor when passing in the street, from a minister. Several times was his judgment put to the test by doctors and ministers. He would always say, "Good bye, doctor," and "Good bye, reverend sir," and never make a mistake, except the doctor left his medicine case at home, and then Dandy could not tell the difference, and all who wore a long black coat and did not carry a medicine case were divines in Dandy's estimation. Once a friend of Abner's called at the house to see Delilah when she was ill and Dandy said, "Good morning, doctor." The doctor, to test the parrot's intelligence, went out and came in without his medicine case, when Dandy called to him—being in doubt whether he was a minister or doctor, or both—"You old rascal." The doctor now was convinced that the medicine case was the only thing that made the doctor, in Dandy's estimation, so, taking up his medicine case, he passed Dandy's cage again, when Dandy said, "Good bye, doctor." One day as Abner's cousin was talking to Dandy, she said, in fun to him, "You old rascal," and Dandy, with an Irishman's wit said, "There are two of us." Dandy hated everyone but mother, whom he loved with all his strength. After she went East, the first morning he forced open his cage door and wandered all over the house, look-

ing into every nook and corner in search of her. Coming into the dining-room where Abner was, with his wings down, he called Delilah several times, and when no one answered him, he turned to Abner and looking up in his face, asked, "Where is mother? Here is mother's boy," and he kissed mother several times, that is, made a noise like Olga Nethersole does when she is osculating on the stage. Abner now put him back into his cage and tried to coax him to eat, but he called "Mother" night and day, until he left for the East and then Mrs. Martin took charge of him. She says his grief for mother was pitiful in the extreme; he would call all night for mother to come to him. "Mother, come to your boy; poor Dandy is sick, mother," but mother did not come, nor did she care. Dandy died for her, but she was living for herself alone. Mrs. Martin, who was indeed a kind-hearted woman, did all she could to cheer and comfort him, but like Rachel of old, he refused to be comforted, for those he loved deserted him and he was fast dying of a broken heart. For weeks this kind woman tried to save this marvelous bird, and would carry him with affectionate care in her lap all day, but every few minutes he would say, "Where is mother? Here is mother's boy," and repeat, "Poor Dandy is sick, mother." Weeks passed, and months, and this poor bird suffered tortures and at last he died, Mrs. Martin's tears running down her face

as she held him gently in her hands. Dandy raised his head and looked up in her face, and in his dying breath asked, "Where is mother?" and as he stretched out his neck and died the last sound that came from him was, "Oh mother!".

Greater love hath no one than this, and like most true love, it was wasted on a barren soul—a soul neither competent to reciprocate such love nor worth one atom of such genuine true affection. Dandy was mourned for, for several days and at last was laid to rest by a friend of Abner's in his own garden. He was buried like Sir John Moore, at the dead of night, the sod with his whip-handle turning, while the moon showed its misty light and the lanterns dimly burning. Dandy was gone, and all who knew him were sorry that he was no more. He had several mourners, Abner and Mrs. Martin being chief. He cost when young, one hundred and sixty-three dollars, and a thousand wouldn't have bought him.

When Abner now entered the room to see what was left of his pets and to visit them, he walked first over to Romeo, the splendid specimen of golden billed English blackbird, which was singing at the top of his voice.

"How do you do, Romeo?" said Abner. Polly, a double yellow head Mexican parrot answered in impatient voice, "Talk first to the little girl, please; oh, talk to the little girl. Where is momma?"

Dandy is dead. Poor Dandy is dead. Polly all alone. Talk to the little girl. Polly's head itches and she wants a cracker. Oh, do talk to the little girl."

"I do not know how I can give them up," said Mrs. Martin, "I am so attached to them; leave them to me for a few weeks more. I might then be ready to give them up."

The blackbird was whistling his beautiful song and the skylark from Erin's Isle was pouring out his soul as he danced along the front of his cage when he recognized his kind master's voice. Abner spent several hours with them; their presence reminded him of the days when he and Delilah and all their pets lived happily together. That was before too much brother-in-law entered the home.

As Abner walked down Market Street to the boat he met an old friend, W. D. McArthur, wholesale commission merchant of San Francisco, who, like Abner, was an enthusiastic sportsman.

"Good morning, Mr. L'Estrange."

"Good morning, Mr. McArthur."

The greeting over, they walked together on to the boat Piedmont, bound for Oakland. Seating themselves on the backward, or shy end, of the floating palace, they exchanged yarns about the inhabitants of the plains, prairies, mountains, canyons, rocks, oceans, lakes, rivers and brooks.

Abner told all his experience with rod, reel and gun in Canada and the Rocky Mountains, and William told some hair-curling experiences with ducks, geese and other game, which he hunted on the placid waters of the Pacific. While they were thus engaged, a hoary-headed, dignified divine of three-score years, came on the boat and sat opposite them. His English whiskers, floated by the ocean's zephyrs, looked like a gray squirrel's tail on the mountain side, and like that rodent, he was not long there without a mate, for in a few minutes along came Miss Wesley, a maiden lady of uncertain age, with her lanigerous face and hair hanging down on the side of it in coils like the ends of a ship rope. Her nose was fashioned after the omen on the English sun dial; her chin was like the field spike of a surveyor's helper, and her complexion told most vividly her nationality and antecedents, while the wrinkles in her face, like the niches in a cow's horn, show how many times she had seen old Sol in the zenith of his power.

"Good morning, dear Canon," she said with a smile that looked like an Irish donkey eating thistles. "Oh, I am delighted to see you. Matilda wanted me to wait until tomorrow to make this visit to cousin Louisa, but something told me to do it today, and now I am so glad I am here to meet our dear pastor."

"Well, I am sure," said his reverence, "it is a

pleasant surprise for your spiritual adviser to meet you or any of his flock."

This did not sound right to the ears of this ambitious lady of fifty-six summers.

"I do not like the words 'any of his flock,'" she said, as loud as she could in her own mind. Wishing, though, to make as much of her time as possible, she moved close to the object of her heart's desire.

"Some talk about you being elected bishop by the Southern diocese, isn't there?"

"Yes, my friends are trying to make me accept the call, but I am undecided, as yet."

"Well, we will miss you, dear, so much," she said, her face all aglow with love and delight, as she threw her long arms around his neck. As she did so, one of her long curls struck him in the face, and as he believes in eluding punishment or suffering of any kind, he dodged his head to the other side, where he was met by the other appendix. By this time she had his face covered with kisses and would have seated herself on his knees had he not drawn them in. In the excitement she let her handkerchief fall on his lap, and looking around, she discovered a lady friend sitting on the opposite side.

With a bow, she said: "That is my dear friend, Miss Carpenter, from Berkeley. How do you do," and both met with a crash, for their

osculations lacked the gentleness, softness and sweetness of youth. "I haven't seen you in so long, so long, so long; remember I haven't seen you since we met at Miss Wood's blue tea."

The divine, who sat *hors de combat*, was recovering from the shock and commenced straightening out his clothing, when his celestial orbs fell on the handkerchief on his lap. His knees trembled, his side whiskers shook like a lamb's tail, his face, heretofore pale, now was crimson.

The ladies on the boat turned their faces to watch the other cannon on Uncle Sam's fort. The men watched the wild duck as they skimmed over the water. The poor sky pilot, thinking it was part of his surplice, commenced to put it in place, and after a while, he succeeded in making an eclipse, but not before all had seen his efforts to right what he thought was wrong.

After a while, Abner looked at the bashful divine and in a sympathetic voice, said:

"Doctor, that's beautiful scenery, look out the Golden Gate."

"Very fi-fi-fine," said he, with trembling lips.

Miss Wesley had tired of her lady friend by this time, and with stately step she walked towards her pastor and dear friend.

"Well, dear pastor, I had to come back to you, I love to be with you so much. What did you do

with my handkerchief, dear? Did you put it in your pocket?"

The aged divine's face now grew inches in length and the color on his cheeks changed again to the deepest crimson. He played nervously with his watch chain and emblem of his calling which hung from his seamless vest.

"No, Miss Wesley, I did not."

"Well, dear, let me have it; I need it so much, on account of a cold I took in San Francisco."

The poor old man now realized what he had done and he was in a terrible strait. Was that her handkerchief he had stowed away, instead of part of his under-surplice? "I could give it to her if she would only look out the other way," he thought, but she lovingly looked into his eyes, for she understood his actions as symptoms of love's frolics. "Now," thought he to himself, "if I deny I have it, all will know I tell an untruth; what can I do? If I keep it, she will read it as a sign I love her and wish to keep it as a remembrance of her, and she will expect me to marry her, and you know she and her people are poor, and there is Miss Orchid who is rich in this world's goods, as well as beautiful to look on; I love her; she will be mine," he said, with a grin of satisfaction on his face. "I must therefore give Miss Wesley her handkerchief. I will ask her, in fun, to turn her

back on me for a moment; then I can resurrect the wiper and she can have it, with my blessing.

"Miss Wesley, please turn your back toward me; I want to see what is that hanging on your dress," said Nebuchadnezzar.

The love-sick old maid would be delighted to have stood on her head if he had asked her. Straightening herself up she stood right in front of him.

"Now is my opportunity," he said, and with the alacrity of a young deer he drew from its hiding place the handkerchief and handed it to her with a loving smile, which he worked up for the occasion, closed his impromptu pocket and was in peace once more. All on board were glad to see the poor old man out of his dilemma. His face and magnificent, as well as sublime, side whiskers waved with unalloyed joy, and they who, for the last thirty minutes, watched the wild duck on its flight over the deep, and they who, at once became so intensely interested in Uncle Sam's fort, exchanged glances at one another and laughed at the thought of the poor, absent-minded old man's experience.

Now the ferryboat reached the dock, and all moved up the gang plank and were walking on their way to the train. The old man, who evidently was a Republican and believed in the doctrines of protection—but not reciprocity—asked Miss Wesley what train she would take.

"I am going to Oakland," she said. "I will take that train," pointing to the Oakland train.

"Well," said he, "I am going to Berkeley; good bye," and he raised his coltotha to the summit of his cranium and was gone.

"Well," said Miss Wesley, "isn't the doctor the dearest, sweetest man on earth?"

"I wonder," said her friend, "when he changed his mind. He told me in San Francisco he was going to see some friends in Oakland; now he has taken the train for Berkeley."

Abner and his friend selected a seat just behind the one occupied by Miss Wesley and her friend, and as they sat there they heard the would-be little girl talking about the dear doctor to her friend. After a while she drew her companion toward her and said in pseudo bashful tones, pretending to be as much frightened as a lonely quail that had just escaped the hunter's careless aim, "The doctor wants me to be his wife; for pity's sake don't tell anybody about it, for they would tease me so. I haven't made up my mind yet, whether I shall take him or not. You know I am an orphan. My mother died when I was young and I have no one to ask advice of. I believe, also, the doctor is an orphan."

The crocodile tears now flowed like a mighty Volga down her wrinkled cheeks, and amid sobs, she continued:

"I do not know what answer to give him."

"Well, when did he pop the question?"

"What do you mean?"

"When did he ask you to marry him?"

"Oh, my; you don't know what love is; love is like wireless telegraphy; it flies without wings, words or wire; it raises itself on pinnacles and slides into hearts whose souls are prepared to receive it—a heart as soft as jelly, and in as high a state of cultivation as an onion bed; there it amalgamates with its destiny. Now they are one," and she hugs her old-fashioned umbrella. "Do you understand it? It's perfectly lovely—too sweet for anything," and her ring-curls move like a cat's tail when she is about to spring upon her victim, as she sang the words of Southey:

"They sin who tell us love can die,
With life, all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
In heaven, ambition cannot dwell,
Nor avarice in the vaults of hell.
Earthly these passions of the earth
They perish where they have their birth.
But love is indestructible;
Its holy flame forever burneth,
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth,
To waft on earth a troubled guest,
At times, deceived, at times, oppressed;
It there is tried and purified,

Then hath in heaven its perfect rest.
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest time of love is there."

"No, I don't think I do, if that is love. I have never had such experience," said Miss Michael. "Wasn't there some talk of the doctor marrying Miss Cooper?"

"Oh no; he just treated her kindly because he wished her to play the organ in his church, without pay. I am the only one he has ever loved since his wife died."

"Has he ever written to you?"

"Oh yes."

"Well, does he say dear or dearest in his letter to you?"

"Well, he addresses me in both terms," and she drew from her pocket a letter to back up her statement, and, scanning it over, she said:

"In this one he says 'dear' once and 'dearest' three times. What does that show?"

"Well, my dear child, that shows you are on the inside track. Then look out Miss Cooper doesn't switch you off."

This tickled the child of fifty-six winters, and in her delight she grew as frolicsome as a lamb in springtime, and handed the letter to her companion to read:

"THE RECTORY, 5:10 P. M.

"DEAR MISS WESLEY: I wish you would see the

colored man and have him sweep off the sidewalk in front of the church tomorrow. Miss Woods thinks the flowers are beautiful and reasonable, but I think they are the dearest—considering the quality—we ever had. I called on Mrs. Harper yesterday and she has the dearest and sweetest baby I have ever seen. She will show you how to dust off the chancel Saturday. I suppose you have heard the vestry favor reducing the outlay on flowers and think cheaper ones could be made to answer, but I think the dearest are none too good for the sacred edifice.

“ Hoping you will attend to this, I remain,

“ Yours, etc.,

“ J. F. SELKIRK.”

“ Now, Miss Michael, you see he uses ‘ dearest ’ three times in that letter, and ‘ dear ’ once, and signs himself ‘ Yours.’ Now cannot you read, and reading, understand? ”

Miss Michael did not know what to say, so, looking out the window, asked :

“ Is this the car for Piedmont? ” pointing to a car going up Oakland Avenue.

Now they were in front of Miss Michael’s aunt’s house, with whom she stopped, and both got off the car, each shaking the corkscrew curls as they stepped from hill to hill in order to escape the mud. Soon in the house they prepared for lunch, which

consisted of one-half cracker and a glass of Piedmont spring water. The sumptuous meal over, the dishes were removed and Miss Michael introduced Loftus, her pet cat, to the visitor, with the remark:

"Loftus will not stay home; he is all the time at his neighbors."

"Well, isn't he fat?"

"Oh, yes, and I don't know what he lives on."

Miss Wesley after much thought, said:

"I wish I knew what answer to give the doctor tomorrow. He may ask me to decide. What would you say if you were in my place?"

"I do not know, really, what I would do under the circumstances. I'll tell you one thing—I am not struck on clergymen as husbands; I don't think they are good investments, and daily they are growing poorer. I think it is only a matter of time when all the churches will be turned into lodge rooms and club houses. Look at the change in the last few years. In mother's day, women stayed home and attended to the wants of their children and husbands; now they are on the platform and in the club house and treat their children like the modern hen which uses the incubator for her young, instead of the old style of hatching and scratching for them. I tell you the lodge room and women's club house will soon undermine the churches, and like Oliver Cromwell with the king, they will turn them out and take their place; out they go as did Barebone's

Parliament. Since Christianity was founded, its principal supporters were the mothers and daughters of the world. They were confined at their homes all week, caring for their families, and were heartily glad when Sunday came and gave them an opportunity to go out and mingle with people. The Church gave them this opportunity and they appreciated it; consequently they supported it with all the means, energy and influence at their command; they then had only two duties to perform: one to their church and the other to their homes and families. Now, the real modern woman, the simon-pure, up-to-date, instead of wearing long clothes to cover her feet, she wears short, divided skirts and heavy shoes like a man's; she is president of the woman's club, secretary of a ladies' golf club, attends lectures on how to cook and dress reform; she is the theoretical and mannish woman of modern times, the supporter of the divorce courts, the neglecter of the home and children, the wife who studies cooking by books and lectures, and compels her husband to practice it at home for himself and children while she is out on her bike with her neighbor's best-looking son. I tell you, Miss Wesley, that churches are not the style to day, and ministers are not the catch they used to be in grandma's time."

Miss Wesley was getting a little color in her face,

her eyes were flashing fire, and with emphasis, she said :

“ The modern woman may neglect her home and children. Like the hen that uses the incubator, she may turn her back on the church and long dresses and light, fine shoes for the mannish last, the divided skirt, the lodge room and club house. All will do in youth, but look where she will be in old and feeble age. Her children in infancy were cast aside by her for the rostrum and club house and brought up by others. They will not love her or care for her ; her husband’s love has grown cold, through her harshness and neglect. Her former companions and associates of the club house care nothing for her now. They sang in the branches of her prosperity, now they read moral lectures on the dunghill of her misfortune. She sees no celestial future, only the blackest despair and darkness of the grave and narrow tomb. There, she ends ; that is her terminus forever. Contrast that with a true and fond mother like Mrs. Armstrong, of Washington, D. C., who gave her life and best labors to her husband and children. They were her joy, and to help them was her chief delight. She made them happy, and in their happiness she was glad. No club house had the attraction for her that her home and family had ; no lodge room gave her the comfort which she received in the house of her Lord and Saviour, into whose courts she took her family. She always said :

“The dearest spot on earth to me
Is what Wrighton describes it to be—
Home, sweet home.
The fairyland I long to see,
Is home, sweet home.
There how charm the sense of hearing,
There where love is so endearing,
All the world is not so cheering,
As home, sweet home.
I’ve taught my heart the way to prize
My home, sweet home.
I’ve learned to look with lover’s eyes
On home, sweet home.
There, where vows are truly plighted,
There, where hearts are so united,
All the world beside I’ve slighted,
For Home, sweet home.”

And now that her end is not far distant and sickness and years tell their story, she is surrounded and ministered to by her grateful and devoted children, who bless her in their strength and aid her in her weakness, comfort her in her pain and cheer her in her loneliness, and well might the writer say of her, “Friend of my better days, none knew thee but would love thee; none saw thee but would thee praise.’ Be it days, weeks, months or years before the final summons is issued and she hears the words, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’ When the end

comes, be it sooner or later, it will be exchanging this life for a blissful eternity. She believed not in the club that would leave her at the grave, but in Christ and His Church that go with her through the dark valley of the shadow of death and whispers in her ears, 'Fear no evil for I am with thee, my rod and staff comfort thee.' Now, Miss Michael," she continued, "if I think tomorrow or next day, as I do now, and the doctor presses the question, I will most assuredly say yes."

"All right, Miss Wesley, come out for a walk," and as they strolled over the fields, Miss Wesley thought only of the doctor, and Miss Michael of both. They spent one or two hours in the open air, and both felt better for it. They retired early in order to take advantage of the beauty hours of sleep, and next day they were fresh and cheerful.

Miss Michael handed Miss Wesley the morning paper, and she read it, when all at once her eyeballs shot out like a savage tiger's, and after a few gesticulations and frenzied movements, she fell off in a swoon.

Miss Michael seeing her, thought she had an epileptic fit, rushed to her assistance, and raising her up gently, asked what was the matter. No answer; she asked again. Miss Wesley now looked up in her face and clutched violently on the paper.

"Some friend of her's dead," exclaimed Miss Michael, "and I must see who it is." So she tried

to get the paper from her, but she could not. She held on to it with all her force, clutching it like a vise. After a little, she relaxed her hold on it, and it fell in a crumpled mass on the floor. Miss Michael took it up and looked at it, and the first thing that met her gaze was an article in double-leaded type, headed: "Marriage in high life. Youth and old age join hand in hand. Dr. Selkirk of Christ Church, San Francisco, married last evening to the young, beautiful and wealthy heiress of John E. Orchid, Esq., at her father's home on Atlantic Avenue, Berkeley. The ceremony was performed by the Bishop of the diocese; the presents were costly and numerous. The bride, a belle of twenty summers, wore a gray traveling dress and carried in her hand a prayer book. The happy couple after a wedding breakfast was served, left on the Southern Pacific for the South and the kingdom of the Chrysanthemum. The bride will be at home after November first, Tuesdays, at the Parish House, San Francisco. They left amid showers of rice, old shoes and good wishes."

"Well, wasn't he mean?" said Miss Michael, "to deceive you so?"

"Well, I don't care if he is married, I had my answer made up; it was to refuse him. I thought over what you told me about Miss Cooper and just made up my mind I wouldn't give my precious young heart to any man who flirted, so I was going

to tell you this morning that I would positively refuse him. I meant to tell you at the breakfast table. One thing I will tell you, that he'll look after his colored man and the dusting of his church in future. I am through. I'll never trust another old softsoap again. Miss Michael, can you see what Miss Orchid could see in him and his side-board whiskers, anyway?"

"Oh, what a lovely parrot your neighbor, Mrs. Martin, has. Hear what she says, 'Talk to the little girl.' Hello, Polly, hello. Miss Wesley walked over to where Polly was and said, "Pretty bird."

Polly said, "How is the old maid?"

"Oh, you naughty bird, good-bye," and Polly said with emphasis, "Good-bye, good-bye," as Miss Wesley took the car for the San Francisco ferry boat, where she and her corkscrew curls were lost for a while in the scramble of that busy city.

Miss Michael pretended to be a manhater and a believer in divided skirts, women's rights and all modern improvements, but at last fell a victim to cupid's darts which were deliberately aimed and fired at her by James Gorden, the millionaire miner. She is now a convert to the happy home. Lectures on clubs have no attractions for her. She sings to her husband, "Where Thou Art Is Home to Me, and Home Without Thee Cannot Be."

"What are you going to do Sunday, Abner," said William.

“Going to church, of course.”

“Well, where will we go? Dr. Selkirk will preach his first sermon tomorrow since his marriage and wedding trip. Let us hear what he has to say, and also see how he stood the voyage and journey.”

“All right, I’ll be ready.”

Sunday came and both started for San Francisco. When they got there the church was packed to the door to see the bride as well as to hear what account the groom could give of himself and his travels. Abner waited until all got seated, then he and sweet William were shown into the minister’s seat and the beautiful, blushing bride welcomed them with an angelic bow and the quintessence of a honeyed smile. William, seeing that was the only place where a seat was possible, walked fast so as to get in ahead of Abner in order to sit with his wing next the bride, but Abner, though slow in his movements, showed his good judgment by piloting himself on the right side, consequently, he was first into the seat. After being seated, he stooped his head in prayer. William followed his example in bowing his head and counted up to twenty-five, then they were ready for service.

After a while, could be heard in the distance the voices of the choir sounding like angels’ visits, and they soon materialized with the poor old doctor bringing up the rear. He presented a sorry spec-

tacle. It was old age trying to look young. With bowed head, stooped shoulders and feeble tread, he continued the journey to his place, with an expression on his face and his dilapidated carriage, he reminded us of one who had almost run his race. He brought back to Abner's mind most vividly, the appearance of the celebrated race horse Imp after her defeat at Saratoga by Blues. His eyeballs stuck out like knots on a pine tree, and his under chin rested on his surplice.

William and Abner looked on him with pity, and remarked that the Oriental climate was too warm for him. The assistant now commenced the service, and the old divine answered the responses with the congregation in a weak and tremulous voice. When the assistant commenced to read the lesson for the day, the old man sat down more emphatic than graceful. When it came to his turn, he looked over the congregation with that expression on his face, "If I am so soon to be done for, what was I begun for." He would not shirk his duty, and when the notices for the following week were handed to him, he read them in almost an inaudible voice. The first notice read was, "Ladies' Guild will meet at 3 p.m., Tuesday, at Mrs. West's." "The sisters of the Church will meet the ladies of the congregation at the Sunday-school to see what steps are necessary to take to aid the foreign mission board. Now there is one thing I wish to impress on you, and it



is this: The infant orphans of the Church have been neglected in the past, but now Mrs. Selkirk has started a little mother's society to care for the dear little ones, and all unmarried ladies and widows are invited to join. Now, all the young ladies and others who wish to become little mothers will meet at the rectory at 6 p.m., Thursday afternoon, when the usual offering will be made. Let us sing hymn number 427."

"What's the matter with the doctor today? He is all mixed up," said William.

The old divine now mounted the pulpit and read his text from Proverbs, Chapter III, Verses xv., xviii and xxvii. His movements were eloquent, but his voice could not be heard beyond the first row of seats. His young wife, seeing his predicament, hung her head. He closed with an eloquent appeal to the congregation to love one another as Christ hath loved his Church, and then turning, as usual, he closed, and walking from the pulpit almost unnoticed into the vestry where he breathed his last. Doctors were hastily summoned, but his soul had winged its flight to the God that gave it, and his body lay limp and dead upon the floor.

The congregation were notified that their beloved pastor had died in the harness of his Lord and Master, and the tears that flowed down the faces of the congregation told more loudly than words can speak how much they loved him.

The days of mourning being over, all that was left of him was consigned to the tender keeping of mother earth in Oakland cemetery. All sympathized with the kind, affectionate and beautiful young widow as she followed in tears, all that remained of her beloved husband to its last resting place. The sun shone brightly and tenderly upon the coffin as they lowered it down into the grave, and as the minister repeated the words, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," the grave diggers poured on the clay and soon mother earth had him in her embrace. The place that heretofore knew him would know him no more. Few there were at the grave who did not shed tears, as the young widow stood gazing down into the grave. As each shovel of clay was put upon the coffin, she wet it with her tears, and genuine and heartfelt were they, and many indeed were her sympathizers when she turned her back on the little mound that showed the place where her partner of six months was laid. She walked with a slow step towards her carriage, resting on the arm of her father. Now in the carriage, they were soon back in the paternal home where she was truly welcomed by her fond mother. In the quietness of her chamber, she mourned her loss. She hid her sorrows like all who feel true grief. She preferred the lonely chamber to public sympathy, while her noble soul was not blind to public feeling.

Miss Wesley severed her connections with the

church and became a full-fledged Methodist ; nevertheless, she was a true Christian and a good worker in the cause. She presided over the Ladies' Foreign Mission Club, and taught the junior class in Sunday-school. Her kind and unselfish disposition soon gathered around her a number of true friends, among them, the pastor, the Rev. J. M. Berg. He was a widower of sixty-two winters. He took great delight and pleasure in escorting Miss Wesley home. He pointed out to her the beauties of the field, flowers and plants, and after a few months, popped the question, not in the same manner as Dr. Selkirk, but in the common, ordinary, every-day words of " Will you be mine for better or worse ? " And she, with true bashfulness, exclaimed, " Oh, so sudden ; please let me dream over it tonight, and I will give you an answer in the morning. "

He bid her good-bye and said he hoped her guardian angel would suggest to her to accept. She did not wait to consult angel or archangel, for " yes " had reverberated from toes to brain chamber and back again. " I think I was foolish, " she said, " I should have said ' yes ' at once. His love may catch cold in the night air and die before morning from pneumonia. How would it be to write him a note ? I'll do it at once, " and she penned the following :

" Rev. J. M. Berg,

" MY DEAR PRECIOUS: Feeling you would not

rest well on account of me putting you off until tomorrow, my heart is with you, and what is left with me suggests that I send to you these words which give my soul delight, and I hope your dear soul, joy. My answer is YES. With undying and undivided love, I am now and forever will be,

“Yours for better,

“JENNIE WESLEY.”

The fifteenth of June was the day set apart for the wedding. Miss Wesley called in her dressmaker and asked her if she could make her look handsome as well as young. The dressmaker looked at the skeleton before her and said, “With the aid of some wire and cotton batten and some nice cloth, I can build your body up. Your face, you will have to submit to the artist, as I haven’t had any experience in that part of the anatomy.” They worked for days on the dresses, letting out here and taking in there, letting down at the waist, cutting off at the bottom. At last perfection was reached and the model stood erect on the floor—a pretty fair sample of womanhood.

“I wish now the wedding day was nearer; I can scarcely wait until then to show my dress.”

The door bell now rang and the doctor came in answer to her summons sent out the night before.

“Doctor, what will I do to take those wrinkles out of my face and put blooming youth instead?”

“Hold your head over a pot of boiling water for twenty-four hours — twenty-four hours before the ceremony.”

“I’ll do it, doctor,” and in an hour she was sitting with covered head over the water. Patience was put to the test during these weary hours, but she was looking to a bright future and they only seemed as moments. When the time was up, she uncovered her face and she could scarcely recognize her former self. She now retired to bed for a little rest and soon was fast asleep, dreaming of the transition from oldmaidism to wedded life.

Next morning she got up as spry as a kitten and commenced to put her things in order. Exposure to the cold air brought neuralgia to her face and soon it was as smooth as sweet sixteen. She cared not for the agony; looks, not ease she was after. The wedding morning came and she jumped out of bed, to find it was the moon was making the light and not the sun. She retired again, only to jump out at four o’clock. Time never flew past her as slowly as now. She would willingly have hurried old Father Time along if she could. While she was in dreamland, the hour came for breakfast. The bell rang and she skipped, like a three-months’-old lamb, to the dining room. Seated at the table, she asked for a cup of coffee. In her excitement, she used salt for sugar, then put the butter into the

coffee and poured all out on the bread on the table.

"You're excited, my dear."

"I know I am," she said, with a radiant smile upon her face, for now coming events were casting their shadows before.

Her dressmaker and maid now awaited her and soon commenced to construct her. She was ready. The dressmaker, as a preliminary to collecting her bill, puckered her mouth and said, "Anybody would fall in love with you now, Miss Wesley. It doesn't cost much to make one of respectable lineage look well. A lady born will always look nice."

"How much is your bill, Miss Burns?"

"Only a hundred and fifty dollars. I'll give you a detailed statement, if you wish. I wouldn't ask it from you now, only I am superstitious about a person getting married in clothes that are not paid for. I wish you a bright and happy future, and that is my reason for urging you to pay the bill now."

The bill was paid, being about five times what it ought to be, but the dressmaker understood Miss Wesley's weakness and played upon her.

The hour for going to the church was now at hand, as also the carriages to convey the bride, bridesmaid and guests to the church, where the groom and his best man awaited them. The Rev. William Best, uncle to the groom, performed the ceremony. As the giddy and happy pair left the church amidst the good wishes of the congregation

and friends, they slipped on the sidewalk. His teeth rattled over the stones, while her hair flew in the wind. What was left of them got into the carriage and were driven to the Southern Pacific, where they took the train for the East. The teeth and hair were sent by mail, care of the Waldorf Astoria, New York City. On their way to the metropolis they visited several places of interest, but the one that impressed Mrs. Berg most, was the mighty Falls of Niagara.

After five days they reached the capital of the Empire State, where they put up at the Tenyick. Next morning they visited the Capitol, listened to the senators and assemblymen as they wrangled over appropriation bills; took the day boat for New York, where they enjoyed the scenery of the Rhine of America. Arriving at the Waldorf Astoria, like all good people, they met what had gone before. Each claimed their own and now that they were man and woman again, they felt more at ease. While in New York they visited several places of interest, among them, the art gallery and the aquarium. Next day they took the Pennsylvania railroad for the nation's capital. They called on the hero of San Juan Hill, saw Mark Hanna, and the colored son of Africa who risked his life in his effort to save the late lamented President from the dastardly hand of the assassin. Corcoran Art Gallery and all the Government buildings were taken in their turn.

They wound up in the Smithsonian Institute, and from there, took the Pennsylvania & Canadian Pacific, for home, where a reception was tendered them by the congregation. Now they were at home, they commenced once more their church work.

Abner and his friend chanced in to an experience meeting and were much amused as well as benefited, by what they saw and heard. Each member in turn was asked to repeat their favorite verse in the Bible. When it came to Mrs. Berg, she said, with bowed head, "O Lord, suffer little children to come unto me."

Abner remained in Los Angeles for two years, spending his summer months in the mountains and Saratoga. One day as he sat upon a cliff, writing a description of the landscape before him, two young ladies came near with a camera and took a snapshot of him and the rock he was sitting on. Abner, as usual, was too bashful and too full of French etiquette to move or speak, but the gray matter under his hair was kept busy trying to guess who they were and what was their object. For months he pondered over the incident, but could arrive at no definite conclusion. A little later in the season he was introduced by the proprietor of the hotel to two young ladies whom he recognized as the camera fiends. One was the young widow of the late Dr. Selkirk, and the other was Miss Britta Web, elocutionist, from Toronto, Canada. Mrs. Selkirk recog-

nized Abner at once as the gentleman who sat in the pew with her on the fateful day when her husband breathed his last.

They in a short time became fast friends and wandered along through glen and dale, over crag and canyon, drinking of the pure waters of Mount Shasta and breathing the invigorating air of the hillside.

Abner was very anxious to find out if she had a brother, for his dread of too much brother-in-law was well founded. He hadn't the courage to ask her if she had one, but kept beating about the bush.

One day he would ask her, "Will your brother come for you?" and she would answer "No."

Next day during their conversation, he would sandwich the query, "Did your brother come for you last week?"

"No."

Next day he would beat about the bush again, and ask, "Did your brother come here with you?"

"No, father did."

Abner was in mortal agony for fear that she had a brother, for he felt he was desperately in love with her, but would not think of allowing it to go too far before he found out whether she had a brother or not, and if she had, it would be all over between them. They were now always together and wandered over hill and dale talking sense and nonsense.

One June morning as they walked up the moun-

tain side a lady and gentleman on horseback rode past. Mrs. Selkirk recognized the lady and said:

"How do you do, Miss Helen?"

The gentleman, recognizing the voice, turned in his saddle and said, "Good morning."

"Good morning, Brother Wilson," responded Mrs. Selkirk.

This sounded like a thunderbolt to Abner and his heart fell "with a dull, sickening thud," and lay on his shoestrings for almost a year.

They spent that day upon the mountains, shooting squirrel and cotton-tail. In the evening they returned to the hotel. After dinner they went out for a walk, but did not mention the brother question again. The following morning she got ready and took the train back to Berkeley. Abner stayed there until October, when he went to Los Angeles, looking forward to the June morning when he would come back to Mount Shasta and meet the lady of his choice. She was indeed, beautiful to look on, as well as affable and genial in manner, kind-hearted—a true soul.

Abner was a widower over four years, Delilah having died of enlargement of the heart in Oakland, California, almost five years before. Mrs. Selkirk was three years a widow and in her twenty-fourth year. Her mother died in the fall and her father the following spring, consequently she was alone.

Abner's visits now grew more frequent, and it was

rumored they were to be married the following June, but one June wedding was enough for Abner. It was in the beautiful month of roses that his first entangling alliance was executed, and at that time he got such a severe poultice of brother-in-law's affection that "no June for him." Mrs. Selkirk's aunt died suddenly and it was put off till the fall.

After spending the summer in the mountains, Abner could not go back to Los Angeles without calling on his friends, Mr. and Mrs. M. T. House, Mr. William D. McArthur, Mrs. McArthur, Marguerite, and the baby, for he remembered their kindness to him when he was ill and alone, and gratitude was one of Abner's principal traits. When there he also visited the game haunts on the Contra Costa mountains.

It was on one of those visits that he got into trouble with the fish and game commissioner. He was charged with shooting quail out of season. Abner did not intend to violate the law. His violation was a mere accident.

This day the sun was shining with all its strength on the grassy mountain sides, and as Abner walked along the slope of the "summit" he saw a rabbit dash out of a small brush in front of him. He sent a number of six cartridge after him. When the smoke cleared away he found two quail a few feet from the dead cotton-tail, and as he reached down to lift them up, one was not yet dead and it

fluttered along in the grass. Now he was grieved at the sight of the wounded little bird, suffering pain with broken wing and blood oozing from its body. He raised his gun and pulled the trigger again in order to end its misery, when he heard a coarse voice which sounded like a fog horn in distress, call out:

“Hold on there, d—n you, I’ll make you hump for that.”

Abner left the game where it lay and walked across the canyon on a plank. It was after a severe rain storm and the waters rushed down from the hills in torrents, jumping in huge heaps from rock to cliff, then dashing high in the air, tearing small trees up by the roots, bounding down the canyon, leaping over chasms, rolling stones and clay along with it in its mad fury as it fought its way to the ocean. Its vagaries brought vividly to Abner’s mind, his drives over the Shaker road in the days of his prosperity. When on one of these drives he saw a band of school boys who were stealing apples from a farmer at Loudonville, run, jump and roll over fence and hedge, just like the mighty waters tumbling down from the mountains. The boys kept that up, followed by the farmer and his dog until they were lost in the woods and out of sight.

Abner was very near rolling down with the rocks and broken trees, for as he gave the last step on the plank, it gave way in the center, but when his

weight left it, it righted itself again and was apparently in good order to carry the game farther over. Abner would not run, but walked leisurely looking for more game along the brush-covered hills.

After a few minutes he looked back to see how near the enemy was, when he saw him within a few feet of the broken plank. Thinking he had as much intelligence and cunning as an elephant, therefore would test the plank before stepping on it, he did not think it necessary to call to him. In a few minutes he again looked back and the game warden had disappeared and Abner thought he had gone to his doom. He listened and after a short while, his hoarse and half-smothered voice could be heard ringing along the hillside and calling for help. Echo was the only answer that came from hill or dale. No one was near but Abner. A pair of mountain eagles soared above him and looked down as much as to say, "Your slip is our hit."

Abner reluctantly walked over to where the voice came from and called out:

"Where are you?" and added in mocking tones, "D—n you, I'll make you hump for that."

"Stop your nonsense; just get a long pole and hand it to me and then you can pull me out of here."

"I do not see any poles around."

"Here is a little saw, and cut down one of the young trees."

"No," said Abner, "I will not do that; read that

sign: 'No tree cutting on this land.' Pay me fifty cents and I'll cut it down for you, and you'll agree to pay all damages I may sustain in helping you out of your dilemma."

"I'll pay you when I get out."

"No, I must get my pay now, for any man who is mean and low enough to take the job you have would swindle their benefactor."

"For God's sake, get serious, man, and stop laughing at a poor fellow hanging on an oak tree for dear life, all wet and mountains of water rushing under him with such force that should he slip, destruction and death positively await him."

His argument so far had fallen like rain on a duck's back, so he tried the sympathetic dodge, and while assuming a pained expression, said:

"My shoulder is broken, I think; I cannot put my hand in my pocket to get the cash, my clothes are all so wet. I will soon have to let go if you do not help me. Please help me. I fell into that torrent off that broken plank and would have been drowned at once, only I caught hold of this tree in time to save myself. How long, dear man, do you think I can hold out in this position? I am almost stiff with the cold, and I ask you to cut a tree with this saw and pull me out."

"First swear," said Abner, "in sight of high heaven that you will not prosecute me for accidentally shooting the quail out of season."

"I will not swear; I have already sworn to do my duty and I'll do it."

"Well, I think," said Abner, with a sarcastic smile, "you are right. Do your duty always and I'll follow your example and do mine, and leave you alone to attend to your own business and I will go and attend to mine. I'll get some cotton-tail for dinner before the sun gets too strong."

"Oh, for heaven's sake, do not leave me here to perish."

"Well," said Abner, "you seem to be somewhat anxious to get out of your predicament; will you agree to give me a hundred dollars for my services if I pull you out?"

"I will."

"Then, out you come," and he set to work and cut down the sapling and handed the end of it to the hanger on, and he grabbed it with both hands and came very near pulling Abner with him into the terrible torrent. Abner tugged and pulled.

At last he dragged this inferior specimen of manhood up the bank, and looking at him in his delapidated condition, said:

"It wasn't worth the trouble," and like the boy who pulled out the good-for-nothing fish, he felt like kicking it into the water again.

This thing which now looked like Darwin's missing link, raised himself up on his hind legs, and grabbing Abner by the collar, said:

“Come with me; you’re my prisoner.”

Abner, with a disgusted look, said:

“You look like that. I will not go with you, and if you touch me with those wet clothes I’ll sue you for damages.”

“Well, you must come, and if you resist, I’ll shoot you on the spot.”

“With what?” said Abner, and he drew from his pocket a Smith & Wesson revolver.

Abner knew the cartridge was soaked, consequently rendered harmless, so he said:

“I defy you, and I will not go.”

He again caught Abner by the collar and pulled him.

Abner sat down, so the game warden could not lift him up or make him move.

Abner said: “I’ll sit here until next Sunday, if necessary. I will not go with you. I will give you my name and address, and I will pledge you my honor that I will be in court any time you name and stand trial for the offence.”

Abner handed him his card, and the dripping, drooping guardian of the inhabitants of the mountains walked off, a sight for the gods to behold. His legs were eighteen inches apart as he trudged over the valley to the road, at least six miles from his home.

Abner stayed on the mountain until he got a few cotton-tails, then went home and he heard no more

of it for a week, when one day as he was riding along with Mrs. Selkirk in her carriage, he espied the gamekeeper and his assistant coming toward him.

Words cannot describe his feelings. He was indeed scared for fear they would then know him and arrest him. No sooner had they come up to the carriage than the old officer recognized Abner's face. Without ceremony, one of them caught the horse, while the other reached for Abner's collar, and in a brutal voice, said :

"Come with me, you outlaw. You are now my prisoner."

Abner tried to explain to Mrs. Selkirk, but they ruthlessly pulled him away, saying :

"Well, we'll show you, you lawbreaker, you outlaw of the mountains."

Abner was mad clear through, and vowed he would never again aid or help anyone.

Mrs. Selkirk was dumbfounded and could not think out what was the cause of all this. She went home, covered with shame, to ponder over it.

The trial would not come off until the following day, so Abner's lawyer, Judge Sullivan, made application to get him out on bail, but couldn't find a judge until next morning, so they decided to leave him with the captain until the trial. Mrs. Selkirk called at six p.m. to see him and to get some light on the subject. She found him happy and con-

tented, eating his dinner with the captain, and it was a first-class meal. The captain's kindness to him was due to the fact that Abner belonged to the same old secret society as his guardian. That is why he was allowed his liberty and made a guest of the captain's during his incarceration. He slept in a bed in the captain's room and was just as comfortable as if he had his liberty.

As Mrs. Selkirk entered, both stood up and Abner introduced her to his friend as Mrs. Selkirk, of San Francisco.

Abner said to her, "I am surprised, as well as delighted, to see you. I did not expect you would come to me in this place, and under the circumstances."

She answered, "I think when a person is in trouble that is the time you want a friend, and now is the time a true friend will bare her bosom to the storm of ridicule and insult and stand by you. I hope you do not take me for the friend who lives in the sunshine and dies in the storm; besides, I have too much faith in you to believe you guilty of any crime, and anyway, I possess too much the spirit of fairness to condemn anyone before I hear both sides."

"Well," said Abner, "both sides will be heard tomorrow at nine a.m. I have the old war horse and celebrated jurist, Judge Sullivan, of San Francisco, to defend me. He thinks we will make it

kind of warm for the gamekeeper before we get through with him. He will get the worst licking any man ever got, and," said Abner, "I have always been a pretty good hand to pilot a legal battle, and before I get through with him he will know there is a God in Israel."

"Well, it is a game case, anyway," she said, "and people do not look on it as they do at other crimes. You haven't told me how it happened."

"How could I? I hadn't the chance. To make a long story short, I fired at a cotton-tail and shot two quail as well as the cotton-tail. They were hid in the grass in line with the rabbit, and he saw me, but I risked my life to save him, the worthless wretch, and this is my reward."

"Ungrateful wretch," chimed in the captain, adding, "Well, Mr. L'Estrange and I have had a pleasant visit; that's all it is and that's all it will amount to."

"How fortunate," she said, "for him to have you. He would die in a cell, if kept there for two days, it is so damp and cold."

Abner said to her, "are there many who know about it?"

"It is all over town," she replied, "and they have put it in its worst light, saying that Mrs. Selkirk was taking a ride with a criminal in her carriage the other day, when the officer recognized him as an old offender and pulled him from her side. She is

an unfortunate woman in her selection of husbands and admirers."

"Well," said Abner, "keep still; do not reply until after the trial, then I will have published the whole truth, and the world will then see it just as it is."

"Now, I do not mind it and hope it will all be settled tomorrow. I do not consider it any disgrace," and she now moved toward Abner with a smile, to bid him good-bye, saying:

"Be of good cheer. I will be here in the morning to watch the trial. My dear man, don't look cast down, especially when you are right, and remember, right or wrong, I am with you; my place will be beside you against all the world, if necessary."

Abner now felt better than he did at any time since it occurred, and he slept soundly that night. She also felt better, and when she retired that night she prayed for Abner's vindication and release.

The morning came, and the captain called Abner to breakfast, saying:

"You had better eat your breakfast so you will be ready to meet your lawyer when he comes."

Breakfast over, Judge Sullivan was ushered into the room and at once engaged in an animated consultation with the captain and Abner. The officer looked at his watch, said, "Time is up," and they walked up to the courthouse.

In a few minutes the case was called, and after some preliminaries Judge Sullivan said that the case could either be decided by the judge or a jury, and he or his client didn't care which. The opposition would not agree to the judge deciding it, so the jury were called, and after a little wrangling, the game-keeper and his lawyer stated their side of the case against Abner, and told the facts just as they were, only, he said Abner shot the quail intentionally.

Judge Sullivan asked him if he thought Abner could shoot a jackrabbit without aiming at him.

"Yes, he might by accident."

"Well, then, why couldn't he shoot the quail by accident as well as the jackrabbit? We deny," said Judge Sullivan, with a smile, "that there were any live quail on Contra Costa mountains that morning. We defy you to show. This is all a piece of spite and greed. You come here to damn your immortal soul and stain this man's character for a few paltry dollars. Show your dead quail. I say again, there were no quail—dead or alive—on Contra Costa mountains that morning."

Abner knew that when the game warden fell into the water he let go all the game, consequently they were safe in defying him to show them. A Scotchman on the jury asked the warden how much he'd get out of the fine.

"That is not the question," said the warden, "it is a matter of doing my duty."

"Answer my question," said the juror.

The judge here stopped that line of inquiry.

Judge Sullivan said in closing his case:

"This is the frozen serpent coming to life in the warm breast of a benefactor, and then turning around and poisoning her blood so that she died to show its gratitude. This ungrateful creature we saved from the torrents at the risk of our life, and his first act is to turn on his savior and for twenty-five pieces of silver, try to sell him into bondage."

The judge now charged the jury and said there was no proof before them that the quail was alive before Abner fired the shot, or that they were dead after it. In fact," he said, "we have no proof that there were any quail around. During my experience on the bench it has always been the practice to bring the game into court and prove by them his guilt. I cannot understand, if the officer is telling the truth, why the game are not in court. They should have been here," he said, with emphasis.

The jury now retired to their room for deliberation. While there, Abner's lawyer was busy preparing papers to serve on the game warden. They were now ready and he handed them up to the judge for his signature. This done, Judge Sullivan handed them to the proper officers with instructions to serve at once.

The door of the jury room now flew open, and

as the jury walked out in single file and took their places, they smiled at Abner and his lawyer.

The clerk called out, "Gentlemen, what is your verdict?" and the answer came back, "Not guilty."

Now Abner's friends gathered around to congratulate him as the audience and officers commenced to disperse. One officer walked up to the game warden and served on him a complaint in an action brought by Abner against him for services rendered and cost of action, while another put his hand on his shoulder and said, "You are a prisoner. You're not a resident in this county, and you will have to remain in jail until you pay your debts or give bond."

The gamekeeper now saw the tables were turned and that he was the defendant and prisoner instead of complainant.

Turning to Abner, he said, "This is all rot."

"Well," said Judge Sullivan, "we will fight it out and give it such a shaking up before we get through with it, that nothing but sound matter will be left."

He, seeing that they meant business, and also hearing Mrs. Selkirk whisper to Abner, "Don't settle, let him go to jail," made up his mind that he had struck a snag, and the cheapest way was to settle. He turned to Judge Sullivan and asked him how much was the full amount.

"A hundred and fifteen dollars and fifty cents, and you can go," was the reply.

He paid the amount, and Judge Sullivan put half of it in his pocket and the other he gave to Abner.

They now took a carriage for Mrs. Selkirk's house where they had luncheon and some grape juice together.

The following morning Abner was again leisurely walking over the road past the Dingy homestead as the sun was peeking out from behind the mountains. He wended his way along the road leading to the Salmon's residence, passed it on the left, and continued up the road to the summit. The sun was now shut out by a heavy fog which covered the hills and valleys like a mammoth veil, consequently he could not see game over ten feet from him. Thinking it useless to continue his search any further, he determined to sit down and wait until the fog would move from the mountain side. Acting upon this thought, he seated himself on a small rock behind a tree, expecting a wolf or mountain fox to come along in search of a morning meal. He thought to himself, "this would be a good morning for reynard or the coyote to come on rabbits and quail. I will wait and see if I cannot get at some while they are in quest of food."

When there about an hour he heard the old mournful bark of the coyote in the distance, but could not see it on account of the dense darkness. Scarce had that voice died away, when right behind him, like an echo, came an answer from its mate.

They kept up this discourse for over an hour, Abner sitting still, expecting every moment to see one of them come in view. His eyes turned in every direction, peering as best he could through the darkness. No form was visible, except the huge mountains which he could see dimly in the distance. They were silent for a few minutes, then they commenced again and made the valleys ring with their hideous howling. Abner could hear his own heart beat as he sat still expecting every moment to see the coyote pass him on its way to join its comrade. It was a solemn time, and each second seemed an hour as he watched for the ravenous enemies of all the small inhabitants of mountain slope, forest brush, crag and canyon. Again they ceased, but in a few minutes commenced again their whining. It now sounded nearer than before. When one strong, mournful howl came from the distance, echo answered up the valley. The sounds were now becoming so mixed that Abner could not locate any of them and things were beginning to grow monotonous, when he espied a twelve-year-old rattlesnake, with a tongue of fire, crawl out from between the rocks. It raised its head and looked around to "view the landscape o'er." When its gaze met Abner's luminary, it drew back again under the rocks. Abner was somewhat afraid of him, and while he looked around for coyote, fox or prairie wolf, his eyes always in their circuit, scanned more closely the place where the

rattler had disappeared. He could now hear plainly the noise of something coming through the brush. He laid down his shotgun, and raising his Winchester rifle to his shoulder, waited with bated breath the onward march of the noisemaker. While looking and listening, he thought it best for a moment to turn and see if the rattlesnake was making any move. No sooner had he turned his eyes in the direction of the rocks, than he could see the head of the rattler protrude from under the stones scarce ten feet away. He now laid down the rifle again and taking up the old reliable repeating shotgun, took aim at the old boy, whose silken teeth and blood-red tongue were plainly visible. These teeth, though finer than hair, and even as silk, pierce the skin and cause sure death to all animal life. The sound of the gun now rang down the valley and as the smoke cleared away, Abner exclaimed:

“ Missed him, by Jove! ”

The snake now approached within eight feet, when it turned with its tail towards Abner. He knew there was no time to be lost, and in an instant took his aim and fired. This time he did not miss, for the shot had taken the rattler's head and ten inches of his body down the mountain side. Abner ran towards it, and when within a few feet of it he could see the deadly poison flowing from the serpent's mouth as it opened and closed in dying agony. Soon it lay still upon the grass, limp and dead. As

he raised himself up, a coyote passed by, and he again raised the shotgun to his shoulder, when a voice called out :

“ Don’t shoot in this direction.”

He could not in the darkness tell whether he was an Indian, black, or white man, but he could plainly see it was a man. The coyote, hearing the voice, changed his course and dashing past Abner, ran down the hillside. The figure threw a stick at the coyote as it passed him. It missed him, but fell among a family of quail, which nestled in the hillside grass. They, hearing Abner’s shot and seeing the darkness, lay low. One of them was wounded by the stick and fluttered along the ground ; the rest flew into the canyon. The coyote, on his way down the hill, encountered another enemy, who fired at him and he retraced his steps, passing Abner again. This time Abner sent a charge of number one shot into him as he passed. The coyote rolled over two or three times, but soon got on foot again and with jumps and bounds scampered into the darkness. Abner followed his track a little way, when he lost sight of him. Listening for a few moments, he could hear the wounded wolf moan in agony in the brush at the bottom of the canyon. Guided by the voice, he made his way over rocks and between trees and shrubs until he got to the place where the coyote lay dying. Satisfied that he had done his work, he walked back to the figure.

When about twenty yards away a voice called out:

"You got that fellow sure. What did you strike with the other shots?"

"That reptile behind the rock," said Abner, as he pointed to the snake lying on the grass.

Dr. Thaur, who was on the mountain also that morning, and the one who fired the shot at the coyote first, came up the hillside to investigate the rumpus. Abner recognized him and asked him if he fired at the coyote. In his usual vein of good nature he replied that he intended to fire at the coyote, but shot the fog.

"How many, old boy, have you? Can you spare a few for my larder?"

"Well, not out of this crowd."

"What did you get?"

"An old rattler and a gray wolf, and my friend here, got a quail."

"Why," said the doctor, "quail is not in season, so he had better look out. I shot a few yesterday, and had a good run from the warden into the bargain, but I escaped and I made up my mind I would not risk it again."

"Well," said Moses, "was that you, Doctor, I chased yesterday? I gave you a hard run, didn't I? And now I have you without any effort."

The doctor's chin dropped and he looked dumb-founded. With an indescribable expression on his face, he said to Abner:

"Well, how in h— did you get in such company?"

At this, the game warden smiled. The thought of getting some of the money back that Abner had gotten away from him yesterday put him into a mirthful mood.

"I cannot help it, doctor; I have sworn to do my duty, and I'll do it."

This nettled the doctor, and with sarcastic voice, he said:

"It is not so much your keen sense of duty as it is your infernal greed to get the twenty-five dollar blood-money. I detest such creatures as you are."

Abner was now an interested listener, and his Irish wit came to the rescue.

"Doctor, let me take your horse and carriage and I'll drive into the city and swear a warrant out for both you and the gamekeeper for killing quail out of season. I saw him kill this quail this morning with his cane, thinking no one saw him do it in the darkness. I was near enough and could see him raise his hand and strike the quail with a stick. I have the quail in my pocket and will go at once and get both of you arrested. Then I will receive fifty dollars for prosecuting you both and I will turn it over to you and you can pay your fine with it. Our friend can wander down in his pocket and pay his fine of fifty dollars out of his stock on hand. Doctor, if we are not able for him, I hope he will

beat us. I have every confidence in our ability to give him the muddy end of the stick."

The doctor's face now was radiant with smiles—not alone at the thought of saving his fifty dollars, but at the richness of the joke and the thought of getting back at one he despised. The countenance of the gamewarden now fell and he hung his head like a sick dog, and as the doctor wrote out a note to his coachman, ordering him to drive Mr. L'Estrange to the city as fast as possible, the warden said:

"Please wait a minute. Can't we fix this up between us without resorting to extreme measures? I confess you are too many for me. How would it be for us three to swear allegiance to one another like David and Jonathan, and later, England and Japan?"

"All right," said the doctor, "so mote it be. Now repeat after me," said the doctor, as his body shook with convulsive laughter, "'I, Moses Bernstein, of the county of Contra Costa, swear, that I will forever keep and conceal in my heart all the actions of my mutual friends, Dr. Thaur and Abner L'Estrange. I swear, in future, that I will not see them, or either one of them, when they fire at a quail or any other game, and act accordingly. This, on condition that they will keep this secret until death calls them to make angels out of them, or kindling wood, as their cases may deserve.'

Ceremony over now," the doctor said. "Let us now smoke the pipe of peace together," and he drew from his pocket a book which Abner thought was a Bible, but proved to be a book made specially for temperance lecturers or other hypocrites to carry their libation or quiet smile in, without creating suspicion.

The warden laughed when he saw the book, as the doctor turned it up on a corner, while he poured the mingled souls of wheat and corn into a cup and handed it to the warden, saying:

"Put these good spirits into your old body and they will change you."

Moses reached his hand for the cup, and as he did so, said:

"Doctor, you're up to date."

"Well, we have to be, haven't we, old man?"

"Yes," said Abner, "for it is in California, as it is everywhere else—a survival of the fittest—a constant fight for life."

"Oh," exclaimed the doctor, "here is our old Scotch friend, John Lomax. Well, old fellow, how do you do this morning?"

"Second class, mon, but I soon will be better when I get a little inspiration out of your book; I like to commune with the spirits, you know, doctor. I am a spiritualist."

The doctor took the hint without the kick, filled the measure to the brim and handed it to the farmer,

who, in a jiffy, had it on its way to murder his indigestion.

"Doctor," he said, with a smile, "I like your medicine best of any. No doctor like our friend here, is there Moses?"

Moses was the gamewarden, and he sat in deep meditation and did not answer the farmer. The spirits now commenced to warm up the farmer and his tongue wagged more freely. Turning to the doctor, he pointed to signs which he had put on the posts and fences, "No shooting or trespassing allowed on this land. Beware of arrest."

"Doctor, I put up those signs to keep the hunters off, so that you and your friend could always find game on my land. I wish you would come around, though, every day. You now only come three times a week. I'd like very much if I could see you every day," and he sang, "I need thee every hour."

"Well," said the doctor, "John, how would it be to take another one for tomorrow?"

"All right," said the farmer, in high glee, "I am ready to carry it around until tomorrow," so another glass of the liquid found lodgment with its elder brother gone before.

John was now feeling good and soon he commenced to deliver an oration on the blessing it was to have a kind doctor so convenient. It was not

he, though, that was speaking; 'twas the voice of the spirits in prison.

The sun was now forcing the fog to retire from the hillside and valleys, and soon could be seen and heard all kinds of small game.

"Come," said Abner, "let us move. The game will now be out, and we must try to get some. I will walk along near the summit and you three scatter in a line down through the brush and you will drive them out, and I will try and knock them over before they get into the canyon."

"Now, brother," said the doctor, turning to Abner, "I saw you in a carriage the other day, driving down Atlantic Avenue, with a young lady. If I am not mistaken, you were taking advantage of the dead. I did not think you would be guilty of a behind-back act, as that surely was. While my mind was pondering over your actions and trying to make out what it meant, the carriage suddenly stopped as if a ghost had appeared in front of you. On second thought, I concluded, you had a broken axle or wheel, for I saw two men walk with a quick step up to the carriage and after some talk with you, all three walked away together, leaving the lady to ride back to her home alone. Don't you know, old man, that this was a most ungallant act? Why did you do it?"

"Well," said Abner, "our friend there arrested me for shooting quail a week before on this mount-

ain, out of season. He waited his opportunity to take me in. In his meanness he thought then was the time. I could have shot him dead when he laid his hand upon me, but knew there was no use in making any resistance, for he was cunning enough to take an assistant along. Imagine my humiliation at being arrested at such a time and under such circumstances."

The old farmer now raised his voice to a high key and said, with emphasis:

"Moses, if you do anything to these men again, I'll shoot you the first time you put your foot on my land. Do you understand? And no one will be the wiser. Now, if you want to be a neighbor to the Scotchman and keep on friendly terms with him, so that you can get your milk and butter for nothing as heretofore, and save that carcass of yours from the worms, you will let my friends alone. I tell you, he who interferes with them cannot be on friendly terms with me. They can shoot the chickens in my yard, if they wish, and no one can say they are not welcome. Doctor, isn't that right?" he said, as he extended the horny hand of honest toil to the physician, who, grasping it, gave it a hearty shake.

"Well," continued the doctor, "how did you two settle the other day?"

"Oh, he beat me," said Moses, with a downcast

look. "I lost a hundred and fifty dollars by the deal, and my wife hasn't let up on me since."

"Well, I hope that will teach you to behave yourself in the future, and if it does, Moses, it is a good investment," said the farmer.

Abner was now growing impatient at the delay, and standing up, said, "I am ready boys; come on."

As he said this a flock of wild ducks flew over their heads. Bang, bang, and two out of the flock came to mother earth.

"Good shot; keep that up. Scatter in the brush and keep in line down the hill with me," said the doctor. "I am determined to knock some cotton tail out this morning. My old friend there can do it if we only get them on the run. Would you like another smile, John, before we start in?"

"I think I could run better if I had one," said the farmer.

"Well, here it is," said the doctor, "there is luck in odd numbers."

"All ready now," John said, as he ran down the side of the mountain. Soon they were beating the brush and the rabbits ran out in every direction. Abner was always ready for them, and soon they had all they wanted and were thinking of going home, when a coyote ran past them with six fox hounds, in full cry after him. It was a grand sight. All now ran for the hilltop, where they

watched the chase. The cry of the hounds was sweeter music than Paderewski, Patti or Sousa could make in the ears of the sportsmen now stationed on the hilltop. They brought back Abner to his boyhood days, when he often risked a whipping to follow the hounds and huntsmen, as they chased the fox over the corn fields of the farmers in the British Isles. The coyote led them a merry chase to the summit and then down again, when he wheeled and ran around the hillside about midway between plain and summit. He kept about a hundred yards ahead, sometimes a little more. It was now one o'clock, and the doctor expressed a wish to go home and attend to his patients; but all, with one voice, insisted on him staying to see the finish.

The hill is about three miles around and is situated in the midst of a beautiful country, a smooth, rich valley lying all around it. This valley is covered with orchards and brilliant green fields, thickly interspersed with homes, which have all beautiful surroundings. The door-yards and lawns are filled with brilliant colored roses and flowering shrubs, of the rarest, as well as the most beautiful and fragrant varieties. They are in bloom throughout the entire year. The finest crops of alfalfa are raised on the plains, and thousands of California State flowers can be seen on the hillside near the valley. The clouds form and reform on the summit, producing the most beautiful effects, joining

earth and sky together. The mountains look like great pillars resting on the earth, holding up the heavens.

The hunting party watched the chase from the summit, while the hounds and coyote made the circuit around it.

"Look," cried the doctor, all excited, "the dogs are gaining ground, but they look tired, while he seems as fresh as ever. Oh, he has wheeled back and gone around that rock. They have lost him."

Now the music of the hounds ceased for a little, but soon they were on his trail again. The coyote always, when hunted, runs in the same track, over and over again. Now the dogs were in full cry and full view. It is indeed music, and most exciting to hear the cry of the hounds and watch the wolf, as he runs before them.

For fully an hour, they keep in view of him, while he makes a full circuit around the mountain, as before—half way between plains and top. Now, he wheels again and dashes over the rocks and through the steep-sided canyons, dodging in and out among the trees and shrubs that thickly line the sides of the ravine. He wheels again around some high brush and heads for the summit once more. The dogs are now within fifty yards of him and are making desperate efforts to catch him.

It is now three p. m. but no one speaks or thinks of home. It is plain to the most casual observer

that this unmerciful prowler realizes he is in imminent danger of losing his hide. He turned again for the plains, as if he intended to cross them. After running a little way he evidently changed his mind and was convinced that he dare not venture over them, as it would be impossible for him to reach the mountain range; so, turning toward the summit again, he ran up as high as the old circuit and then continued it. The dogs were again gaining on him. They now were running two abreast and all so close together that you would think it was only one dog was after him.

"It now looks, doctor," said the Scotchman, "as if this day would be his last."

"Yes, indeed, John; I wouldn't care to be as near my end as he is."

The wolf's actions now showed symptoms of despair, as he faced the plains once more. He reached the flat land about twenty-five yards ahead of the dogs, with his head straight toward the mountains on the opposite side. The dogs now gained rapidly on him and it looked as if it would be only a few minutes before he would be among the has been's. The dogs were now within a few yards of him and soon he was compelled to turn towards the hill. In his desperate straits, he ran into a cave in the ground and thus evaded his pursuers for a little. The cave was about a quarter of a mile long, filled with water, and of loop shape. It came out

under a tree a little further over. It was formerly a gold mine, and had been abandoned on account of the water. One of the dogs followed him into the cave, and their muffled sounds told the sportsmen the wolf had run to ground. The other five dogs leaped and jumped around, trying to find a sight or trail of him. For some time, it was a fruitless search, but the dog that followed him into the cave swam the water and compelled him to go out. When he left the cave he was about a hundred yards ahead and was running fast, and seemed fresh. He had to swim the water in the cave and it seemed to give him new life. Soon the dogs got on his trail, and for two hours more, it was indeed a race for life, limb and hide. They were now gaining fast upon him. The dog that followed him into the cave lost sight and scent of him altogether. She scampered up to the men on the summit, on bleeding legs. The doctor attended to her, and soon she was in shape to run again.

Now it was a close run. The dogs were within a few feet of him, and he and they were seemingly all tired out. The lame dog now caught a glimpse of him as he climbed over a rock and she joined the chase and lead it for about six miles, when the wolf jumped over a precipice, put his back between two rocks, and with stripped teeth faced his pursuers. The hounds commenced to bark furiously at him and would rush at him, and when they did

they generally lost some of their hair with skin attached to it. The sportsmen now ran up. The dogs, seeing them coming, took courage, and one of them made a desperate dash, caught hold of the wolf by the side of the neck and dragged him from his entrenchment, where they all joined in pulling him to pieces. He died like the Boers—game to the end, but had to succumb to superior numbers.

“Well, old man, we had better go home and get something to eat. I am exceedingly hungry,” said the doctor.

All commenced to move homeward. The doctor and Abner walked across the plain to where the colored coachman was waiting for him. They entered the carriage and in a few minutes were skimming along the highway leading to Berkeley.

When they reached Oakland Park, a ragged looking man with a red nose, wrinkled and debauched face, raised his hand as if to signal them to stop. The doctor called to the polished driver to halt and see what this gentleman of leisure wanted.

“Well, my boy, what’s the matter?” said the doctor.

This specimen of played-out humanity replied with emphasis:

“I haven’t got a d—n cent.”

“Well, nobody said you had,” said Abner.

"But I am broke, man."

"Who says you're not? We're not responsible for your financial condition. You spent all your money," said Abner, "trying to paint that nose a good deep red, and you have succeeded."

"Well, will you let me have five cents?"

"Without any collateral security? You have mistaken us for money lenders. You have asked the wrong men. We are all like you, at the present time, except that nose."

The horse now commenced to get restless and the coachman let him go, and they soon were crossing Atlantic Avenue.

"I had better get off here," said Abner, "and take the car for the hotel."

"Not by a jug full! You will come with me and we'll eat a half dozen of those cotton tails before we go to bed."

They were now in front of the doctor's residence, and getting out, the doctor called to a colored boy and instructed him to brush off the guests. This done, they all followed the doctor into his study where a gas grate burned cheerfully. When seated, the doctor said:

"That was a great day's sport we had. I have witnessed many a chase, but never before was lucky enough to be in a position where I could see them at all times, as we did today. The dogs must be well fed and cared for to keep that steady run up

for eight hours. 'Twas great fun for all, except the wolf, who paid the penalty for the many sneak acts he perpetrated on his weaker neighbors."

"Say, Abner, how is Los Angeles?"

"Well, doctor, same as ever. Selling lots for twice what they're worth; booming the city for dear life and persuading themselves daily they are growing richer. They are building a great many new houses, but very few good ones. Politics are just as rotten in Los Angeles as in Albany or New York. The other day they had some bonds to sell, and did not offer them for sale in Los Angeles, but carried them to some trust company or banking house in New York. Just like the Cleveland administration denied the right to free men to bid for their own bonds, but sent them to England."

"I cannot understand," said the doctor, "why they do this sort of thing. There is only one reason for doing it, and that is, somebody gets paid for his trouble. People in Los Angeles would have bought the water bonds. I know several who would have bid for blocks of them if they had had the chance, but they didn't have the opportunity, nor will they, as long as they allow the powers that be to do as they please. The people in Los Angeles remind me of a story told of an Irishman and his six-day-old dogs. Taking up one of the dogs, he told him to open his eyes. The dog did not obey, when he

dashed it on the sidewalk and its eyes opened. 'Ah,' said he, in his drunken fury, 'you have got to have your brains knocked out before you open your eyes.' "

"The people of the United States got on to Grover Cleveland and his policy of giving exclusive right to Englishmen to buy the government bonds, but the Englishmen didn't vote for him at the next election, nor did the Americans whom he turned his back on when he had good goods to sell. Cleveland should have learned a lesson from Maria Antoinette and her weak-kneed husband. After election he could say with all truthfulness, 'Vox populi, vox dei.' It has been said of McKinley, the late lamented President, that he always held his ear to the ground to find out what the people wanted. He knew the people of the United States had confidence enough in the stability of their government to put their last dollar, if necessary, into its bonds. He, practicing the old doctrine of goodness, should commence at home, asked the American people to subscribe for the next bond issue, which they did twice over, demonstrating to the world that Cleveland and his cabinet committed a treasonable act when they denied equal rights to Americans with their British brethren. It has been said of McKinley that he always looked out for the interests of his own family. It might also be said—and said to his everlasting credit—that he also looked out with

a jealous eye, for the interests of his own people, the citizens of the United States, according the same rights to North and South, East and West, recognizing only one country, and one flag for saint or sinner, man who wore the blue or grey, and he died president of all. Would that his ghost or some one dyed in the same color would come and occupy the chair in the executive office of the city of Los Angeles; then every citizen could have what bonds they want and they would not be sent to New York, and from there to London, to be held as a lien against the homes of the citizen of the fortunate and unfortunate city of Los Angeles."

"Well," said the doctor, "I think you are right. The city authorities of Los Angeles should first have asked the citizens to take what they could of the bonds, then turn over the balance to whoever would pay most for them."

"Yes, doctor," said Abner, "on that line of conduct a president could not retire to private life on what he accumulated in a few years while in office. Oh, no, doctor, that would not suit the politicians at all; no chance for make on that; no rake-off; no hand-me-back; no tickle-me-under-the-chin for the powers that be, if things were conducted that way."

"Well," said the doctor, "Abner, you are too severe on the politicians; you know it costs them a good deal for election, and to use the language of New York's leader, they are not in politics for their

health. They seldom or ever work for the interests of the people, except it is on a strict line with their own interest. They are mostly all the time casting an anchor to windward for themselves. I notice it is all the same the world over, and I suppose it will be, as long as nature has decreed that the big fish eat the little ones, the stronger live on the efforts of his weaker brother. Compare any of those modern politicians with Warren Hastings of infamous memory, and they will pretend their feelings are hurt by the comparison. He is held up as a synonym of all that is bad, dishonest, brutal, unmerciful and cold-hearted in political life. Well, I tell you, I think he will get a high seat in heaven if those who connive against their own people are allowed to enter at all the sacred portals. Warren Hastings did not plunder his own people, but confined his depredations and crimes to the savage and foreigner. He had no interest in them, further than what he could get out of them. He was like the average jockey on the back of a blooded steed, who, by threats, entreaties and punishment, gets the last atom of strength and speed out of the animal, then takes his saddle under his arm, gets weighed, collects his fee and that's all he cares for the horse; doesn't even condescend to look around to see how it feels who carried him in triumph to receive the plaudits of the field and grand stand. The American office-holders are different. This is their own

land. The people whom they rob, misrule, or sell into bondage, are bone of their bone, flesh of their flesh, and while we are told to do good unto all, we are especially instructed to do right in our own household and with our own people. The United States lost millions of dollars in interest through the unpatriotic and diabolical action of Grover Cleveland, and the people of Los Angeles, as before stated, have lost thousands of dollars by not being allowed to bid in their own water bonds. The people relegated Cleveland to private life, and gave him time to shoot, fish and hunt. They have no ambition for any more of his services. They are fully convinced that his existence was a public calamity, and when he is now heard from or his name mentioned, with almost one voice, they exclaim, R. I. P."

"Well, Abner," said the doctor, "I think this condition of things can be laid to the door of the voters. They do not see the vermin carrying off their wealth, and if they do, they generally say, with a shrug of their shoulders, 'I don't care what they do with them; it's all the same to me.' They forget that it is eating the life blood of the nation, and soon we will be a nation of millionaires, serfs and paupers. The middle class will be wiped out, and I tell you that the people are like a pie—the upper and lower crusts are worthless, unwholesome and unfit for food. It is the layer between the crusts

that is good, wholesome and valuable, just as the middle class are the respectable, healthful and useful citizens. The upper and lower class we could get along without, and the fact is we would be much better off if they had died when five days old, or better still, had never been born. From these two classes spring the immoral, dishonest, the criminal and the outlaw. Statistics prove the truth of the statement, and experience and investigation will back me up in my contention."

"Abner," continued the doctor, "when have you been to Albany? Do you know that Albany is my birthplace, and in it is my Alma Mater? I attended the colleges on Pill Alley on Lancaster Street, and got my sheepskin from there. I am acquainted with most of the old families in Albany. Is it still a Dutch city ruled by the Irish?"

"It was until the last election, when a Dutchman was elected mayor, while his opponent was snowed under by an avalanche of votes. They claim that the Democratic candidate was beaten because he wore corsets and parted his hair in the middle. I do not know if this be true, but one thing I do know, he was beaten."

"Abner, are you acquainted with Robert Pruyn? He was president of the Albany railway and the Commercial Bank."

"Yes," said Abner, "I have seen him several times on the street; but that is all."

"Well, do you know that his father was sentenced to be beheaded for robbing the Oriental government out of millions? The United States compromised the matter for him and saved his scalp. It was a good thing for Albany that they did. Had the law been carried out he would have lost his head and Albany wouldn't have had the benefit it has received from what he stole from the land of the rising sun."

"Why, doctor, to use the language of our friend Moses on the mountain, 'You stun me.' He is now the standard of Albany blue blood and New York State aristocracy—the great I am. Roscoe Conklin never strutted with more haughty step than he. He has now started on the ruins of the Merchants' Bank, a trust company, in opposition to the one presided over by Albany's most representative citizen, John D. Parsons, Jr. You may laugh, doctor, but it is a positive fact, he is the only door through which you must pass into the society of the four hundred located in the capital of the Empire State. The endorsement of the robber's son, as you call him, will grease you so you can slide through into the sanctum sanctorum of this mushroom aristocracy."

"Well, well, Abner, how money makes the mare go, doesn't it? Name the other officers of the new trust company until I see if I know any of them."

"Mr. Grangesard, who I believe, is second officer in it."

"Well, well," said the doctor, again. "He is a son of the cheap-john tailor who used to half-sole and heel my pants on Green street. He used to work in the day time, in a tailor store next to the Mansion House. It must be his daughter the doctors were talking about at the Clinic, when I was there. Dr. Mereness asked Dr. Van Ranslear to explain the nature of the germs that caused the trouble. I myself noticed they had oak bark on the street to kill the noise. Did you hear if she recovered? The medical profession seemed to be interested in her case."

"I do not know," said Abner, "I have never heard of the young lady."

"There are a lot of men in the new trust company, are there not?"

"Yes; most of the officers in the old Commercial qualified under the rules and regulations of the new trust company. The cashier was the only one who was rejected, and he was knocked out on account of having a thoroughly honest mother. It was thought that a son raised by such a mother couldn't be used in the proper way, if opportunity offered. They want a man born and built on the non-conductor principle, one who will do as they want him to, be they right or wrong, and his past record showed

louder than words or pen that he wasn't one of that kind."

"Well, Abner, what is the idea of doing away with banks and starting up those trust companies in their stead?"

"It is simply this: the national banking law prevents the banks from robbing the people wholesale. For some years they have chafed under the restraint put upon them by it. 'Necessity is the mother of invention,' and they have now, in their efforts to evade the law, found a new way to get around an old law, and it is by turning the banks into trust companies. The people will soon awake to a realization of the danger that confronts them from these hydra-headed institutions, and when they do, the cry will be from the Atlantic to the Pacific: 'Away with them and erect on their ruins the old reliable national banking system.'"

"Well, Abner, how is the historical and art society getting along? Are you much of a painter?"

"I am not much of a painter, but a strong admirer of fine art."

"Who is the president of the society?"

"George Douglas Miller."

"I suppose he is a very intellectual man and a good artist?"

"Well, I guess not; the only thing I think he could draw would be an Italian peanut cart. He

is a man who never earned an honest dollar in his life, and I doubt very much, if he had the ability to do it, if he were willing; but he was endowed with the low cunning of all fortune hunters who run around looking for some dead man's money, so that they can marry it and invite the daughter to the wedding. Mr. Miller found such a one and feathered his nest, but if she doesn't look out, instead of being a Douglas Miller, he will prove a moth miller to her father's collection of greenbacks. He is very ambitious to 'found a family,' and with the material at hand he will have to perform a miracle to even make it passable, much less perfection."

"Did you know a lawyer named George L. Steadman?"

"Yes, I often heard of him; he was a very nice, agreeable man. He was so kind that he had his name put on his father-in-law's monument, when he got the old man's eyes closed, thinking his name would protect it from all the storm and violence of the elements. He has two sons, now lawyers, and they married into two very respectable families."

"Isn't it queer, Abner, that Albany hasn't gained ten people in population in twenty-three years? What is the reason of this?"

"Well, it never will prosper, nor cannot until they have about two hundred first-class funerals. They must first weed out those old moss-backs who

hold on, with deathly grip, to the money. They do not want to make Albany a manufacturing or business city. They wish to turn it into a residence place for drones, dudes, good-for-nothings and non-producers. They prefer a college where a few men—or boys rather—will get a classical education, to a factory employing a thousand hands and putting twenty thousand dollars in circulation every week to the fifty the other spent. Do you now wonder that Albany is the only city in the United States of over fifty thousand population that has not gained in the last twenty years? What can you expect of a city that would allow the Edison Works to establish their plant in Schenectady, when they offered to come to Albany? Their coming to Albany would interfere with the Municipal Gas Company and the Electric Light Company of the city. These two companies are principally owned by Brady, Pruyn & Company, and of course the people, in their blindness and stupidity, allowed these two millionaires to fatten upon the city, while they drive all competition out of it."

"Well," said the doctor, "if that is so, Abner, I, as a friend of Albany, would be in favor of a committee of doctors and a few soldiers who would arrest all Albanians, bring them before the physicians and have them examined as to their sanity. Do you mean to tell me that there is another city in the world whose people are as thick-headed as

this condition of things would indicate? When the United States Census Bureau gave to the press their report, I was surprised at old Albany, and until now, was totally ignorant of the cause of its lack of growth. It has many natural advantages, being at the head of the beautiful Hudson River and the center of several railroads. It has the finest buildings in the world on its hilltop, and one of the finest railroad depots in the country at its gates; but it is peopled by a slow and easy-going class of citizens who take little or no pride in the welfare of their city. It is moth-eaten by political intrigue and machination, and corroded by the efforts of some families who have outlived their usefulness. Nature and the State and the railroad have done a lot for Albany, but Albanians have sat on its branches, eaten of its fruit and allowed the enemy to suck the lifeblood out of it."

"Well, Abner, my prayer for old Albany is that its citizens may soon awake to a realization of their responsibility and with true and manly effort, put their shoulders to the wheel, drive out from among them these drones and cormorants who have stopped the wheels of progress and the onward march of prosperity and civilization; put new blood at the helm and soon old Albany will, sphinx-like, rise from its ashes and take its place again among the first-class cities of the union."

"Do you think," said the doctor, "Moses will live up to his word given us yesterday?"

"Oh, I am sure he will, for he is afraid of his life of John Lomax. You could see it worried him all day."

"I think he was also worried because you kept him from getting at me for shooting the quail out of season. I could see by his face he was unhappy and looked as if something was annoying his mind or troubling his conscience. He was the only one in our party who did not enjoy the hunt. Abner, isn't he a Jew?"

"Oh, yes; and if you notice, the Jews are either good or bad, and I think he is of the latter class."

"Abner, did you know a Jew in Albany named C. L. Swartz? He is an awfully good fellow until you ask a favor of him, then you will see how good he is. He is one of those who are always urging you to let him do something for you. Should you ever need him, or, as they say in vulgar parlance, 'If you're in want, come to me and you will want.'"

"Well, Abner, old man," said the doctor with a smile, "you mustn't be so hard on him. There are a great many people just like him in the world whose souls breathe nothing but hypocrisy, dissimulation and selfishness, and in the intensity of their passion for praise, without risk or cost, are continually offering their aid to you when they are

sure you are sitting safely on the branches of prosperity, enjoying the sunshine of success; but let the black clouds of misfortune, failure, humiliation, privation, sickness, poverty or despair settle over you and your home, they will then come out under their true colors, and with others of their class, hold up their hands in holy horror. The hands that yesterday were stretched out to help you when you did not need their succor, now hang close to their sides with clenched fists, and the eyes that yesterday were open, looking for some way to show how true a friend they are and would be to you, are now closed. They are as dark as were the eyes of blind Bartimeus of old, or they will pass by on the other side repeating the hymn, 'For Aid, Look Above,' or, 'I Never Knew You, You Are no Friend or Relative of Mine.' "

"Doctor, they live only in your sunshine and die in your storm. If it is your wife and she belongs to that class, she will say, 'I never loved him; I don't see why I married him. I hate him. I will show my contempt for him by leaving him and taking from him all I can, and give it to my brothers and blood relations.' If it is your mother and she belongs to that class, she will say, 'I wonder why I raised him; I knew there was no good in him. I don't know who he took after.' If it is your father, he is likely to say: 'Well, I always knew he was good for nothing—was too much like my mother-in-

law.' Your neighbor or pseudo friend will undoubtedly join the throng in reading moral lectures on the mire and dunghill of your misfortune, and like Indians at the war dance, show by signs and words that they rejoice at your downfall. Like vultures, they are glad of an opportunity to feast upon the carrion spots of your character, repeating in loud tones so that everybody can hear them within reach of their voice, all your shortcomings and drawbacks, while they cover with the slime of suspicion, the bright, healthy and true spots of a noble soul that has been forced by circumstances to wallow in the mire of public opinion. Instead of playing the part of the good Samaritan, they will satiate their savage nature by putting their foot upon you and sinking you deeper in the mud. If the milk of their human kindness was churned, it would turn into limburger cheese. Doctor," said Abner, "there is nothing succeeds like success. Had George Washington been compelled to surrender to General Burgoyne, instead of being made President, he would have been exalted on the limb of a tree, like a dog, or shot as a traitor, and would go down in history the same as Jeff Davis did—a full-fledged traitor and rebel—but fortune favored him, for through the eloquent efforts of Edmund Burke, the failure to supply the sinews of war was accomplished. King George could not fit out men on prairie wind or mountain storm, consequently,

the immortal George's efforts were crowned with success, and he is now reverently called 'the father of his country, the leader of his people out of bondage; the Yankee Moses.' The bands now at the mere mention of his name, play 'Hail to the Chief.' Again, I say, 'Nothing succeeds like success.' "

" Well, I hate such people, don't you, Abner? "

" Oh, yes, but if we hate all that kind, we will hate about fifty per cent. of all the people, but there are some good yet on the earth; all are not base, deceitful and selfish; all are not living for themselves alone. While Albany has its Pruyns, Millers and Swartz, it also has its good and just men like George Addington; its faithful, honorable and true men like Joseph A. Murphy; its whole-souled men like the Rev. Dr. Terry; its charitable men, like James Teneyke; its representative, upright and prosperous business men, like Albert J. Wing and P. J. McArdle; its pious men, like the two Bishops and Dr. Lawrence. You see there is some good left yet, in Albany. I tell you, doctor, you need not be ashamed of the old city, or be cast down because it is seemingly dead. Remember it had its Swinbourne in its medical profession, the acknowledged leader of the world in surgery. It had its brilliant, sagacious and ever reliable Eugene Burlingame, among the members of its bar. It had its James A. McClure and Joseph Feary among its

merchants. It had its Callacott, Dawson, Rooker and Farrell among its editors. It had its Bleekers, Jermaines and Whites, and a host of other good and true men, among its citizens in the past. Cheer up, doctor, she is not yet beyond redemption. There is yet enough leaven in her to rise to the occasion. She will yet show those who now keep her in bondage that she has life and will live and prosper when they are dead and gone to their reward."

"Now, Abner, who do you think of all the earth, comes nearest your ideal man and woman?"

"Well, doctor, there are several. In the female world, I think the present Queen of England is an ideal wife and mother; so is also the wife of the Czar of Russia, but the queen of all queens, in my humble opinion, is that personification of all that is good, holy, true, patriotic, kind, motherly, open-hearted and handed, a noble, indefatigable worker for the amelioration of the unfortunate, the distressed and the afflicted, Miss Helen Gould of New York City. It may, I am sure, be said in all truthfulness of her: 'Many have done nobly, but thou excellest them all.' She does not think, hint or say she is of aristocratic lineage; she acknowledges her first parents were turned out of the garden of Eden for dishonesty and disobedience, for fear they would partake of the tree of life and live forever and thus escape punishment for their evil deeds. To believe she is of aristocratic birth, she would

have to believe as do New York's Four Hundred, that they did not come of one common parent with the poor, whose forefather was taken from a mud-pile or claybank, but originated from baboons, apes and monkeys and advanced through the laws of evolution from that state, and I tell you, doctor, they haven't changed as much as they think from their forefathers. Evolution, if it never makes more rapid strides than it has in their case, will never run off the track on account of speed. She realizes her body is of clay, the same as all who confess Adam and Eve their first parents. The only difference is, her heart and soul are aristocratic in that they have grown in goodness and purity, and it is they that exalt her above her fellows. She has, indeed, a body the same as all men and women have, subject to all the ills flesh is heir to, but a soul of spotless purity and goodness, whose delight and nutriment is in acts of kindness, following the example of her Divine Master, going about from day to day, doing good, quietly and unostentatiously, not letting her left hand know what her right hand doeth. Now, in my opinion, the late lamented and beloved President was the nearest the ideal man of any who ever trod the earth, since Adam and Eve lived on the banks of the Euphrates. He was next to our divine Redeemer, and I think history will—and if it gives him his due surely must—accord him a place next to Him. His char-

acter was most sublime and beautiful. Brave as a lion in the tour of danger, patriotic, kind and gentle as a woman, forgiving his enemies—even to the cowardly assassin who fired the fatal shot—faithful to his friends, true to all trusts committed to his keeping by an appreciative people.

“Second to him is Andrew Carnegie, the world-renowned philanthropist, whose interest in the education of his fellow man is not confined to one country or kingdom. From the heath-clad hills of Scotland, to the orange groves of Florida, can be found substantial proof of the interest he takes in the education and uplifting of his fellow-men. Many men have given as much as he to sectarian institutions, but his broad mind and noble soul suggest that he draw no line between the sons of Adam. He also shows a good example in giving while he is alive, so that he may see some fruits from his philanthropy. When many millionaires are dead and long-ago forgotten, the name of Andrew Carnegie will be written indelibly upon numerous educational institutions and libraries. He is a true type of the man who received the ten talents in the parable—he is returning them with interest, and his reward will be, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant.’”

“Abner, in all that you have said, I agree. Oh, by the way, Abner, did you know T. Ritchie?”

“Yes, I did.”

“Didn’t he fail?”

“Oh, yes, he was unfortunate in making poor investments, which brought about his ruin. He married a widow whom he thought was rich, thinking she would help him, but, when he asked her for assistance, she axed him. A railroad contractor, also, sold him a gold brick in the shape of contracts to supply shoes and rubbers to his men. He cashed his checks and discounted his notes, both of which proved to be worthless, and helped him on his run downward. In his dilemma he became frightened and fled, first having offered to his creditors fifty per cent. on his indebtedness, but Leoanda, of the National Shoe and Leather Exchange, thought he smelled a little oil in the deal for himself, so he threatened to refuse the offer of fifty cents if not accompanied by an additional ten per cent. for himself, on the quiet. Thus Leoanda sacrificed the interests of those who were foolish enough to entrust him to represent them. If he could not get his ten per cent. he was willing the creditors should not get anything. How much better for those creditors if they had taken a half-loaf, than no bread. Had they kept the case in their own hands, they would have received, without expense, fifty or fifty-two and a half cents on the dollar. Wouldn’t that have been better than to pay Leoanda, who was instrumental in knocking them out of all? But I think their loss was money well invested; it will

aid in teaching them to keep their own hands on the helm, and pilot their own ship through stormy seas as well as calm. If they do not land all the cargo, they will always be on the ground and their self-interest will suggest to them if they cannot save all, save what they can."

"Well, Abner, according to your statement of the Ritchie case, those commercial agencies are nothing more nor less than mercantile buzzards, who live and fatten without effort on the bodies, or cash account, I should say, of their clients or fallen creditors. When I was in Albany last, there was a wholesale shoe dealer, whose indebtedness was about a hundred and sixteen thousand, while his actual assets were a hundred and ten thousand, making enough to pay about ninety-two and a half cents on the dollar of his indebtedness. These commercial agencies and their lawyers got their hands upon the assets, and I learned from reliable sources, that the creditors, who should have received ninety-two and a half cents on the dollar had to be content with less than twenty cents on the dollar. This should be an object lesson to all manufacturers and wholesalers to settle their differences with their creditors direct, and save the assets for themselves from the rapacious maw of these unprincipled, and as Reynalds, one of the creditors, said, commercial sharks. He seemed thankful to get anything out of it, for, at one time, he thought the

lawyers's fees and the bills manufactured by the commercial agencies, would more than gobble up the total assets. In the language of Puck, 'What fools these mortals be.' "

The bell now rang for dinner.

"Come," said the doctor, "let us see how the cotton-tails will go." All got seated, and I assure you, it didn't take much coaxing or whetting of appetites, to put the hunters in humor for the meal.

Dinner over, the hunters once more repaired to the library, where they continued to discuss the present, past and future. After passing the cigars, the doctor said:

"Well, gentlemen, Abner thinks that Moses played him a mean trick. Just listen to what a man did to me the other day, and you will think the trick played on Abner was a favor compared to it. For several years past I have attended, without fee or reward, the family of an engineer on Broadway. He complained to me that he was unable to pay his bill, on account of the small wages he earned. I told him that I posted his bill on the ice in the box, and that I didn't expect him, in his poverty and trouble, to pay me anything. I freely forgave him all he owed me and told him that I would continue to attend his family in the future, as I had in the past, and that he should not worry over his inability to pay me. My dog Fido, the Irish setter, sometimes followed me, when making my forenoon

visits. A week ago he followed me into this man's house, and when they got him there they closed the door on him; consequently, he could not get out. I searched all over for him, advertised, notified the police, sheriff and deputy, and offered rewards for his return, but Fido did not come. Yesterday morning Fido came rushing into my office. He got between my feet, and, on looking down at him I noticed a collar on which was a man's name, street and number. I at once addressed a note to the man, asking him why he put his collar on my dog, and a reply came enclosing a receipt for the money that he paid this ungrateful creature for my dog. He paid him forty dollars. I at once got a warrant out for him, but as he was sick in bed with fever they could not serve it on him. Today I am informed he returned the money, and as I have my dog, the matter, I presume, will be dropped. That was gratitude of a peculiar form—the gratitude which the serpent showed its benefactor."

"Well," said Abner, "as this is an experience meeting, I will let you have one of mine, and if you do not think the ingrate meaner and lower than the boss of Sheol, I will miss my guess."

"Well, Abner, let us have the cyclone. Perhaps we ought, first, have a little of Mumm's extra dry so as to moisten the story and keep the sulphur in it from burning up the place."

"I second the motion," said Mr. Harper.

The motion being moved and seconded, the wine bottle was laid on the table, and soon its contents were blinding the eyes of the jack rabbit gone before. That part of the programme being over, the doctor said:

“Your experience, Abner, is in order.”

“Well,” said Abner, “about four years ago I was in my office, when a gentleman with sandy complexion and dark hair entered. I said, ‘Good morning,’ and with a downward look, he answered, ‘Good morning,’ adding, ‘Can I see you for a moment?’ I replied, ‘Certainly,’ and pointing to a seat, said: ‘Please be seated until I look over this mail.’ I hurried to get through so as not to detain him any longer than was necessary. ‘Now I am ready; what is troubling you this morning?’ I said. He replied: ‘Well, I am thinking of going into the shoe business, in Mount Pleasant, Schenectady County, New York. My name is James A. Lindsey, and I wish to see if you will sell me some goods.’ I sold him the bill of goods and he paid me for it. He bought several bills afterwards, for which he paid. After a while, he had a misunderstanding with some rough characters, and they set fire to his place and stole his goods. He got his insurance, all of which he paid me, for the goods he had already received from me. He sent some of the men to States prison for the offense. When he did, their comrades vowed vengeance that they

would have revenge on him for sending their pals to the toils. Time rolled on, when he again came into the office, said he was about to increase his business, and asked if I would extend him some credit; that he would pay two thousand dollars down and after his brother-in-law's death, which he hoped would soon take place, would pay two thousand five hundred more. On the strength of these statements I gave him nine thousand dollars worth of goods. His brother-in-law died soon after, but he, being absent-minded, forgot all about his promise to pay me the money received from the insurance company on account of his brother-in-law's death."

"Too much brother-in-law again," chimed in the doctor.

"After a few months had elapsed his store was burned to the ground; his means of support wiped out, and his wife and children were hungry. He had his goods fully insured, but the insurance company refused to pay the face of the policy on account of him having a mortgage upon the stock. The case was fought in the courts for over a year. He first took it to Hastings and Schoolcraft, who, also, while being retained by him, took the side of the insurance company. He then took it, upon my recommendation, to Randall J. Leboeuf, who fought it for him. While all this was going on, I was giving him twenty-five dollars a week to keep

starvation and want from himself and family. What do you think did this ungrateful brute do, but go to the insurance company in my absence, tell them that if they gave him his two thousand dollars and five hundred dollars for his lawyer's fees, he would sell me out. He received his cash from the insurance companies, for which he bought a farm, putting it in his wife's name. He then went through the bankrupt court, in order to shut me out from collecting my debts against him."

They all agreed that this ungrateful wretch was the lowest specimen of his race, and should be ostracised by all respectable citizens; his name blotted from the roll of humanity and entered in the books in the rattlesnake world.

"So mote it be," said the doctor. "Well, never mind, Abner; let bye-gones be bye-gones. When yet get the beautiful widow on Atlantic Avenue you'll soon forget all the reptiles you have met in your past life; the clouds will all have been rolled by, and the sunshine of happiness and contentment, will, we all hope, forever dwell upon a sanctified home, made so by truth, and true affection, and may no brother-in-law ever again desecrate your home with his presence. Good bye."

CONCLUSION.

In the preceding pages, I have given a description of one of the many rattlesnakes found in the California mountains. Mrs. C. F. Klise, Clarinda, Iowa, who is a woman above the average intelligence and travel, was pleased to call me down in the following words:

“Did you ever see a rattlesnake? I have killed them, and I found that they carried one front fang, and not the silken, fine teeth that you describe.”

Fearing that there might be others who have seen only one kind of rattler, I would say that there are over one hundred, all differing in the shape of the head and teeth. These various characters, with the exception of the *Aproterodontes*, which refer to the under jaw, have reference to the upper jaw only. I fear it would be dry reading to enter into a minute description of all which came across my path. Sufficient for the present purpose to show that such varieties exist and that it is much safer to keep, at least, ten feet of mother earth between you and any reptile. Now, the rattler with the fine teeth, is disarmed in the following manner: We put a forked stick down on his body near the head, pinning him to the ground, then allowed him to bite at a silk handkerchief, and in that way, we

pulled out all his teeth and rendered him harmless. Some harmless snakes have fangs, that is to say, fang-like teeth, but not connected with any poison gland, and at the back, instead of the front jaw. Again, there are some nonvenomous species that have the power of moving these fang-like teeth, raising or depressing them, as vipers move their fangs and as will be further described presently. Some grooved teeth convey an acrid saliva; others have not any modification of the saliva, the long teeth being of use in holding thick-skinned prey. Thus, we find every gradation, both in number and form, until we come to the terror—the murderous tooth of the terrible cobra of California. In some of the snakes the teeth are so fine as to be almost imperceptible to the naked eye. To the touch they feel like points of the finest pins. Nicholson gives the following four stages: First, the fangs of the harmless snakes, which have no poison gland, but whose saliva is injurious; secondly, those having a salivary gland secreting poison and a grooved fang in front of some simple teeth; thirdly, the maxillary bone shorter, bearing one poison fang with a perfect canal, with one or two teeth behind it; fourthly, the maxillary bone so reduced as to be higher than long, containing only a single tooth. The poison gland, after all, is only a modified salivary gland; it lies behind the eye, whence the venom is conveyed by a duct to the base of the fang, down along

and sometimes through it and is emitted at what we may for the present call the point, into the wound made by it—something on the principle of an insect's sting; as, when inserting the sting, the pressure forces the poison out of a gland at its base, so does the pressure of certain muscles act upon the poison gland, when a snake opens its mouth to strike. In some of the most venomous, viz., the viperine families, the largely developed glands give that peculiar breadth to the head. There is a hideous, repulsive look about some of these that seem to announce their deadly character, even to those who see one for the first time. The evil expression of the eye, the devilish curve of the mouth, with its wide gap downwards and then up again, are unmistakably treacherous, venomous, vicious. Like all other animal secretions, poison is produced, expended and renewed, but not always with equal rapidity, climate, season and temperature as well as the vigor of the villain influencing the secretion; the hotter the weather, the more active the serpent. When the poison gland is full and the old boy angry, you may see the venom flowing from the points of the silken teeth or deadly horned fang, and by a forcible expiration, the reptile can eject it. I have seen this in some species, when angry. They will strike at you with the sound like a sneeze or spit, sending out their forked flaming tongue and gnashing their mobile fangs, letting

you see they have a good stock of the venom on hand, and it is at your service. They may almost be said to spit at you, though literally, it is the mouth running with poison, combined with a natural impulse to strike, which produces this effect. We can, however, by this, judge of the force with which the venom is thrown at you. Some travellers tell us that serpents spout poison into your eye. If an angry one strike and miss its aim, the poisons then seem to fly from its mouth, sometimes to a distance of several feet.

C. C. Hopely writes that the most popular and perhaps the most obtainable of all remedies for the cure—if any cure there is—is alcohol. No wonder the backwoodsmen resort to this, which, without any chopping off of fingers or toes, personal pyrotechnics, or other local tortures, deadens his sensibility, renders him unconscious of suffering, and sends him into a happy obliviousness of danger. It is not a refined mode of treatment, nor one that presents many opportunities of exhibiting professional skill; and it is, no doubt, somewhat derogatory to admit that to become dead drunk is an effective remedy against snake venom. Other old and inelegant remedies we hear of as practiced by the bushmen of South Africa and savage tribes elsewhere, but revolting in the hands of refined practitioners. Deference to science, and loyalty to the profession demands some more elaborate

means; yet, the efficacy of whisky or brandy is admitted by most people, and the pioneer who has not a doctor within miles of him, has his demijohn of whisky at hand. During a sojourn in Iowa, some years ago, when wild and uncleared lands formed the streets of the town in which I was staying, it was by no means, an infrequent occurrence to hear of rattlesnake bites. "What was done to the man? Is he alive?" were questions naturally asked. "He drank a quart of whisky and got dead drunk." Generally, a quart had the desired effect—that is, of causing intoxication. Persons unused to intoxicants might be affected by a less quantity, but so violent is the combat between venom and whisky, that a large dose must be swallowed before any effects, at all, are produced. In the Southern and hotter States, it was similarly used. Indeed, a planter himself told me that Sambo would sometimes prick his hand or foot with a thorn and crying out, "Rattlesnake, Massa," fall into well-assumed agonies, preferring drunkenness to cotton picking; but, when the fraud was detected and less enticing remedies were adopted, rattlesnake bites became less frequent.

Another cure for it is to poultice the wound with salaratus and drink brandy. It is important to impress on the reader lest from the cures above given, I appear to argue that snake bite is not so serious, after all. Notwithstanding these cures, the

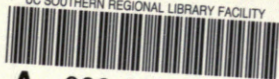
South Americans, in the midst of the most deadly serpents, fly to their tent and prepare for death. Explorers tell us they lay themselves down to die, when bitten by certain snakes. They are said to resign hope, when bitten by the Peruvian viper. In these cases, the symptoms show an exhaustion of the nerve centers and decomposition of the blood. This venom appears to be an indestructible fluid. Toxically, it remains unaltered whether boiled or frozen, or mixed with the strongest corrosives. Mix it with water, alcohol or blood, it is still injurious. The blood of an animal killed by a bite, if injected into the veins of another animal, kills that one also and the blood of the second is fatal to the third and the third to the fourth and so on. Frayrer found that no less than nine creatures could be affected by one cobra. A dog, a pigeon and seven fowls were bitten and all died. The professional snake men who are looked on as so brave, never have a cobra in their possession with the fatal fang. As before hinted, it is just as safe to give them all a wide berth, for, what is known as the mocassin snake in Virginia, may be harmless, while one of the same name in Mexico, may have the deadly drop.





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